

The Creation Of Character

I lift pencil. Draw a maze
in the corner
of an empty dream-sheet. Do it
just to murder time.
Then the pencil moves down
the paper, begins
to sketch a face: eyes first,
staring out unblinking,
then appear other features - sharp
and coldly intelligent. I fail
to recognize the face. I am not surprised
when it moves
its lips (it has no sound,
but I can read lips, help form
its vowels). The tongue flicks,
curses me, then bitterly adds:
'I didn't ask
to be born; I'm a mere accident
of your pleasure.'
The white silence is marred
now, might as well go on,
go on to shape body and give limbs,
give sex. Her
first gesture is to flee
into the penciled maze.
Naturally concerned, I follow
track her for days, weeks, track
her thru my casual creation; find signs
of her passing (and other things too)
but nowhere within the walled landscape
do I encounter her face to face.
Weeks become months become
years; and I grow old, my hair as white
as the paper. Then one day
I emerge.
Look up. She
towers over me, mammoth and brooding,
having breadth and depth far beyond me.

Her voice rumbles, deep thunder
in my sky: 'Too vague, too common.'

She erases me.

~~Ken Stange (from *Nocturnal Rhythms*)