

ADRIANNE KALFOPOULOU

FROM A HISTORY OF TOO MUCH (2018)

First Audition

In the hazed windows — tomorrow's market wares,
plastic containers and cotton underwear stacked on one store shelf.
No takers this time of night, and I'm thinking she's unaware,
on stage in another hemisphere, reciting lines, herself
the daughter Iphigenia. And like Agamemnon listening to her plea,
the sages will decide, judge the worth of her words, and grief.
She's giving of her heart, fighting Calchas' decree
while I, the mother, walk the streets without relief.
Despite the hour, the drunks, the one man chewing on a rusk
with something close to lust, I can't stop thinking of her part —
what grim fate brought his man to his single crust?
I pass parked vans, tomorrow's meat in a lit shop, dark
chopping blocks clean behind the glass, see the skinned lamb last,
imagine butchers making cuts, how the blood will run, how fast.