

TWO BLACK SWANS

Black swan loves black swan if love
is the word for what swans feel. Can one
know for sure what one swan feels
let alone two? They face each other
raise wings expose ivory
underthings flap distal primaries
secondaries white inner

coverts tertial edges curled.
What is primary in this gesture.
Manus like a hand and wrist
set to greet. What is secondary.
Bend of second joint both seen
only in flight. And tertiary.
Curled edges ape repeated

calls that high-pitched melodic
trumpeting from the extended neck
the lifted-up vermilion
bill that says love and love again love
too. Each swan utters garbled
wordless sounds inflected to say more
than a word stretched to a point

where it has lost shade colored
degrees like the gray fringe on sooty
bodies. Calls do not carry
far but far enough to hear a tint
of desire the white sub-
terminal band brightening in red
irises beyond the red

tip reflection of sameness
be it desire or image each
swan doubled in the water
in the eye. And what is primary.
Both are male longer necks bent
over a trail of cygnets who do
not seem to care or differ

from other cygnets. Alpha
fathers mean larger lands better food
higher survival rates but
do swans respect envy status does
the surrogate mother hate
or love swan fathers her adopted
cygnets. Are the chased away

couple bothered is their love
better or equal secondary
when two males abduct laid eggs
incubate hatch feed and raise the clutch
together duties shared more
equally. Perhaps that fact is that :
tertiary like the Uw

Oykangand Uw Olkola
who named black swan *inh owonhdhom* as
magical as the Latin
Cygnus atratus. And yet what text
books ban censor or forget
cannot lessen innate attraction
to the subtle wonder in

paradox the idea
unbound like the reflected S-curve
of bodies : wave-like they dip
heads necks draw near the broken image
of one glued back together
bills bugling *love black swan*
in the other's rippled countenance

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