

ROCKET
FANTASTIC
POEMS
GABRIELLE
CALVOCORESSI



A KAREN & MICHAEL BRAZILLER BOOK

PERSEA BOOKS

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A NOTE FOR THE READER

The symbol ⚡ is used as a pronoun in *Rocket Fantastic* when referring to the figure of the Bandleader. It represents a confluence of genders in varying degrees, not either/or nor necessarily both in equal measure. It is simultaneously encompassing and fluctuating, pronounced by me with the intake of breath when a body is unlimited in its possibilities.

Shave

Like the buck I am I turn my head
side to side. I hear the leaves
rustle. I shake my head a little
and birds reel 'round the forest.
I am no branch. My head turns
to the side. I see out my side
eye. The deep pool of the eye
sees itself pool in the mirror.
I oil myself 'til I am all a lather.
My chest heaves out
so my full heart can abandon
the ribs' stockade. Where
the bullet would go if the hunter
were a good shot: that's
where I place the razor.
I make my skin taut. I pull
my own neck back and to
the side. I come for myself.
Yes, I was a lady once but now
I take the blade and move it
slowly past the jugular, up
the ridge of my chin where
the short hairs glisten. I was
once ashamed. It was a thing
I did in private. My own self
my quarry. No more.
Look how the doe comes 'round
and also the doves and also
the wolf who lets me pass.
The fox offers me the squirrel's
hide to buff myself to shining.
There is no such thing except
the smoothness of my face.

☼'s huge. Standing there in the woods

where I didn't even see whose at first.

☼ doesn't know I'm looking.

☼ moves a little bit and kicks the ground.

I was walking by myself as the sun set.

I kept going in deeper to the greenest spot until I found a clearing.

☼ was the clearing.

☼ took the clearing up and stood there still and watched me 'til I saw whose.

I saw whose shoulders first and then whose neck.

I think ☼ was so golden in the sun I didn't know what ☼ was. And I thought:

the branches were whose horns.

I thought § was an eight point stag.

And how whose chest made a kind of giant heart out of me

out of my eyes looking.

And § let me look.

§ stood there in the green not moving.

I thought whose horns were leaves.

I saw eight branches coming from whose head.

§ didn't stop my looking.

§ didn't run away.

I watched the whole of whose.

I saw whose arms and the taper of whose legs.

§ let me watch whose for maybe hours

but really moments like a gift.

Like when you're almost home and smell them cooking supper

but you're still outside and could just
turn back around.

We stood like that together. % let me touch the whole of whose.

Every rise and muscle.

% let me rest on the hollow of whose
neck and breathe it in for four whole breaths.

% said my name or % shook whose head inside
the leaves and sighed and let the light

come into us. % lets the light

hold us for awhile.