



1997

Bathsheba's Lament

Stephan Craig

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/inscape>



Part of the [Poetry Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Craig, Stephan (1997) "Bathsheba's Lament," *Inscape*: Vol. 17 : No. 1 , Article 15.

Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/inscape/vol17/iss1/15>

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Inscape* by an authorized editor of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@byu.edu, ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.

Bathsheba's Lament

Stephan Craig

This, his city, isn't much in the way of vegetation.
The rocks grow where the cedars don't, and the sand
Substitutes for the flow of milk and honey.
But who ever needed any of that for a sunset?
It was a beautiful evening and I was
Naked in it.
The expanse of blue wove into the orange curtain, casting spectra
All around it. And I can imagine the colors he saw rippling
About my bath and about me.
I, of course, had no intention to flaunt myself.

Yes, I had dreamt of the royal halls before:
His table, like the backbone of Sinai, his golden harps,
And the altar of his bed.
There would be wine, plenty, and music, and he would
Hold my gaze across the mystery of young women
Dancing to the viols and the tambour.
There was none of that.
We only fled to his chamber, nervous, and he not drunk enough.

I utterly expected my breasts to swell and my cycles to stop.
They did. Creating no need for the ritual bath
On the roof or anywhere else that month as my belly would follow my breasts.
Imagine the king wanting me to lie with my husband
More desperately than he had ached for me himself.
But Uriah preferred the stones outside the palace gate to my warmth
Even having passed months of blood and battle. Making it the last time
We would not go into bed: assuring Uriah's death, the king's hell
And wading me into the waters of both.

The blood has not stopped flowing since then.
Uriah and the child: death would have been nice.
I age among the multitude of his women
And watch his star fall from heaven
To the ground, past the floor of his house, and into humility
From where a Savior could be born.