

THE BIRTH OF VENUS

I smear a thick layer of The Birth of Venus all over my face, turning blue as I meet myself in the mirror. The facemask is a gift from my boyfriend. He bought it during his stay in Japan in the occasion of a computer science conference. It's from Lush, and can be bought in the store next door. This knowledge was however out of his reach, hence had The Birth of Venus never been closer to kissing my cheeks. Soft skin and imaginary memories of cherry blossom dancing with the wind passing by.

The description of the mask reads "come out of your shell", further promising an intensely softening and balancing treatment of one's skin, -an experience comparable to rebirth. As I apply the blue to my face, I catch myself thinking of that time a beloved one saw me putting on a mask, remarking she believed only men would apply in such a way, rubbing it all over with both hands. Further, a woman should use her index and middle finger, and massage until absorption with a gentle and smooth touch. She made me feel so small though I'm twice her height. I wonder how many truths there are, and whether there is space enough for them all to coexist. Unfortunately, my score at last week's multiple-choice test presents a quite harsh counterargument. But then again, counterarguments are crucial for a good discussion to take place. And sometimes it takes bravery to be wrong.

The Birth of Venus was painted by Sandro Botticelli back in 1486. It portrays the newly-born goddess Venus arriving at shore, carried by a disproportionately large scallop shell, brought by the god of wind and greeted by the goddess of spring. Venus is the goddess of love, desire and fertility. The painting is 1.72 x 2.78 m, and I feel small again.

Nothing ever stands still, and the wind is impatient today. I undress for the journey and wonder where I will be blown next. Eager to gain another layer as the past turns quiet beyond recall. Which eyes will I see through to meet myself? Nude reflection in the mirror, this figure being more similar to the goddesses than to most idealized bodies of today. At ease I let the rain fall, blue tears caressing my chest, breasts, hips and thighs. The ocean and the sky, is there anything greater than the horizon where they meet in mellow sunlight? Soft skin and imaginary memories of cherry blossom dancing with the wind passing by.