## RUMOR BECOMES A LINE (MOTHERS' DAY) after the poem "!" by Anne Simpson



Yasmina Rossi in Mothers' Day (2009)

The remains of a film script

Men go to War because it is the only thing that makes them look serious. It is the one thing that stops women from laughing at them.

—John Fowles from The Magus

SFX:

Water lapping

The Mythological Greek Queen Hekuba murdered her son's killer, The King of Thrace. For her crime the gods turned her into a black dog.

CASTLE DAWN:

on the flagstone floor Hekuba's feet

echo waves

Hekuba flings the shutters of her room open

SFX: A WAR CRY...

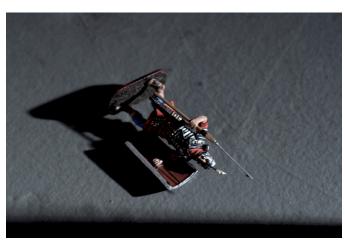
her cry becomes the howling and barking of a dog.



Yasmina Rossi in Mothers' Day



Yasmina Rossi in Mothers' Day



Boy-Toy digitally altered product

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A black dog barking into Hekuba's eye
    whimpering sniffing-
                             barking furiously
    Hekuba stares
                            at the calm,
                                                SFX: muffled roar of marching
    Oars in and out of water
                                                          Child's laughter
Soldiers' boots on the beach
Bloody
Empty
Boots
landing
                                                            on a sandcastle
Hekuba crowned
    Greek ships bob.
                                                                     On waves
A girl's screech (yelp of fun)
Another time on a grassy cliff
                                               A child queen frolicking . . .
at the edge
                                            she leaps off of the cliff
naked
                          splash
    treading water.
    smiling . . .
                                 grinning ear to ear
not even imagining
Miniature soldiers
    on a beach
plastic warriors
    in the palm of a Queen's hand
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the girl flung her white robes away before she leapt

they landed elsewhere on the edge of white shrouds.

Blood-stained parcels dumped on a grey beach

SFX: military fanfare

Hekuba trembling at her window over her shoulder a ship edges onto the horizon

old hands place the crown on her head old hands place the crown on her head old hands place the crown on her head old hands place the crown on her head

and she smiles

her smile disappears.

soldiers marching

on a sunny, beautiful beach.

Priam (a king) appears behind Hekuba

his hand on her shoulder

tenderly

her face terror

Remember . . .

The girl queen screaming as she leapt into the water.

Priam takes what he needs Hekuba stares at nothing

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## Blackening clouds

SFX: Priam's grunts become the sounds of battle

... toy soldiers

filling the beach

SFX: War cries bruises

A toy soldier has a spear through its chest

SFX: silence.

Waves lapping children's voices

A caged soldier screams A woman's scream

Fallen toy soldiers in pools of blood

black dogs licking scarlet pools

A Queen ravaged

Ships bobbing in water

Blood stained water lapping at heels Rushing back and forth



Rocca Sisto and Yasmina Rossi

A Queen stumbling through granite

Falling falling falling falling fallen

overhead

Hekuba

stands with her back to the shutters

Priam's hand touches her

SFX Intake of breath intake of breath intake of breath

On the beach

The Queen has a toy soldier in the palm of her hand

Shutters

shut from the outside

Blood

seeping through the shutters

An oar in and out of water

A black dog

on a beach

sniffing pulling

at a taut leash

Hand releasing the leash

SFX: water lapping

A city street

A black dog appears

and disappears amidst a sea of commuters

SFX: exaggerated marching sounds

a dog licking water

a girl screaming in delight



Tom Della Fave in Mothers' Day

DIRECTOR'S NOTES: In the film *Mothers' Day* (2009), I set out to do a brief motion picture sketch of the subjective image that exists in an audience's mind when a character (often a woman) melodramatically closes windows or doors behind her back. The intimate space between the door and the character's back and hands that we never actually see intrigued me. Somehow the image of those hands is present in the mind because of cinema's powerful influence on the psyche. Near the end of production I came across the actual roots of the holiday now celebrated as Mother's Day and it helped complete the story.

Founded by mothers who had lost their sons in the United States civil war "Mother's Day for Peace" was initiated with a proclamation written by Julia Ward Howe also author of the Battle Hymn of the Republic. Originally observed as a call to peace it was celebrated as such for thirty years until commercial enterprise started lobbying the government. Organizations like the Florists Association stated that "this was a day that couldbe exploited" and in 1914 Woodrow Wilson officially changed the holiday to "Mother's Day" honoring Mothers without any reference to peace.