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Self Portrait with Stained Glass and Feathers

Susan Rich

Pleiades: Literature in Context, Volume 38, Issue 2, Summer 2018, p.
174 (Article)

Published by University of Central Missouri, Department of English
and Philosophy

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/plc.2018.0152>



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Self Portrait with Stained Glass and Feathers

—*after Remedios Varo*

As she works, everything wakes-up
and takes notice: from the alembic

paint-machine assistant, to the magnifying
glass that she uses to render tropical

birds—Merlins and Yucatan Nightjars—
that soon exit her canvas, spiral above

the church windows into a lost
night over-poured with bright constellations

which the painter lightens into breathing orbs;
the same shape that her brown, raptor-like face

takes as she concentrates on her vision—
and though the birds exhaust her, she pulls

each one out from her musical heart:
the perfect body part for a woman transitioning

to an owl—which every girl knows—
will require more than a prayer and a spell.