

unshaven leg

I shaved my right leg but forgot to shave the left leg
habitually, I put on a white blouse
a short skirt
black earrings
red lips
and went to a work meeting
sat down and crossed my right leg over my left —
the shaved leg on the unshaved

— oh, but you are a feminist! they whisper to me
I see your legs are unshaven!
dear colleagues, let's be fair
my right leg is shaved, but my left leg is not
hence, you can't possibly say
that both of my legs are unshaven
black hairs stick out of my left leg
but my right leg is fully all right
one leg is feminist and hairy indeed
but the other one is patriarchal and silky, it really is

— how can you combine that? some (women) say, hurt
— how can you walk about like that? some (women) say, bemused

back home, I tell all this to my lover
with my legs crossed —
the feminist over the patriarchal
and then the other way round
the patriarchal over the feminist
and my lover kneels before me
kisses my legs and whispers
— but I love you both shaven and unshaven
as well as half-shaven
and stark naked

Translated by Svetlana Lavochkina