

PYGMALION'S BRIDE BY CAROL ANN DUFFY

Cold, I was, like snow, like ivory. I thought He will not touch me, but he did. He kissed my stone-cool lips. I lay still as though I'd died. He stayed. He thumbed my marbled eyes. He spoke - blunt endearments, what he'd do and how. His words were terrible. My ears were sculpture, stone-deaf shells. I heard the sea. I drowned him out. I heard him shout. He brought me presents, polished pebbles, little bells. I didn't blink, was dumb. He brought me pearls and necklaces and rings. He called them girly things. He ran his clammy hands along my limbs. I didn't shrink, played statue, shtum. He let his fingers sink into my flesh, he squeezed, he pressed. I would not bruise. He looked for marks, for purple hearts, for inky stars, for smudgy clues. His nails were claws. I showed no scratch, no scrape, no scar. He propped me up on pillows, jawed all night. My heart was ice, was glass. His voice was gravel, hoarse. He talked white black. So I changed tack, grew warm, like candle wax, kissed back, was soft, was pliable, began to moan, got hot, got wild, arched, coiled, writhed, begged for his child, and at the climax screamed my head off - all an act. And haven't seen him since. Simple as that.