



STUDYDADDY

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a year younger than Jules, a year older than the child
who saw Jules open the window
to answer to his name, to let in some air.

There are times I hate being a reporter.
I am afraid of the stories. The voices are too real,
the colors too strong.
I rewind the tape, open another computer file,
hear my son yell goodbye and slam the door
on his way out. I run to the window.
Yes, his head is covered.

Medusa

Poseidon was easier than most.
He calls himself a god,
but he fell beneath my fingers
with more shaking than any mortal.
He wept when my robe fell from my shoulders.

I made him bend his back for me,
listened to his screams break like waves.
He defiled that temple the way it should be defiled,
screaming and bucking our way from corner to corner.
The bitch goddess probably got a real kick out of that.
I'm sure I'll be hearing from her.

She'll give me nightmares for a week or so;
that I can handle.
Or she'll turn the water in my well into blood;
I'll scream when I see it,
and that will be that.
Maybe my first child
will be born with the head of a fish.
I'm not even sure it was worth it,
Poseidon pounding away at me, a madman,
losing his immortal mind
because of the way my copper skin swells in moonlight.
Now my arms smoke and itch.
Hard scales cover my wrists like armor.

C'mon Athena, he was only another lay,
and not a particularly good one at that,
even though he can spit steam from his fingers.

Won't touch him again. Promise.

And we didn't mean to drop to our knees
in your temple,

but our bodies were so hot and misaligned.

It's not every day a gal gets to sample a god,
you know that. Why are you being so rough on me?

I feel my eyes twisting,
the lids crusting over and boiling,
the pupils glowing red with heat.

Athena, woman to woman,

could you have resisted him?

Would you have been able to wait
for the proper place, the right moment,
to jump those immortal bones?

Now my feet are tangled with hair,
my ears are gone. My back is curving
and my lips have grown numb.

My garden boy just shattered at my feet.

Dammit, Athena,
take away my father's gold.

Send me away to live with lepers.

Give me a pimple or two.

But my face. To have men never again

be able to gaze at my face,
growing stupid in anticipation
of that first touch,

how can any woman live like that?

How will I be able

to watch their warm bodies turn to rock
when their only sin was desiring me?

All they want is to see me sweat.

They only want to touch my face

and run their fingers through my . . .

my hair

is it moving?



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