

# Medusa

Carol Ann Duffy

A suspicion, a doubt, a jealousy  
grew in my mind,  
which turned the hairs on my head to filthy snakes,  
as though my thoughts  
hissed and spat on my scalp.

My bride's breath soured, stank  
in the grey bags of my lungs.  
I'm foul mouthed now, foul tongued,  
yellow fanged.  
There are bullet tears in my eyes.  
Are you terrified?

Be terrified.  
It's you I love,  
perfect man, Greek God, my own;  
but I know you'll go, betray me, stray  
from home.  
So better by far for me if you were stone.

I glanced at a buzzing bee,  
a dull grey pebble fell  
to the ground.  
I glanced at a singing bird,  
a handful of dusty gravel  
spattered down.

I looked at a ginger cat,  
a housebrick  
shattered a bowl of milk.  
I looked at a snuffling pig,  
a boulder rolled  
in a heap of shit.

I stared in the mirror.  
Love gone bad  
showed me a Gorgon.  
I stared at a dragon.  
Fire spewed  
from the mouth of a mountain.

And here you come  
with a shield for a heart  
and a sword for a tongue  
and your girls, your girls.  
Wasn't I beautiful?  
Wasn't I fragrant and young?

Look at me now.