

Sleeping Woman, Jilted

I wish you many lovers, the dedicated sort,
rising at daybreak to fracture firewood, carving
clay-pots to feed you oyster flesh, listening
for moon-shifts to fissure like sea-anemones.
Say your breath's bubble water will leave them
heavier, your sperm will star-shoot splayed eggs,
your seed populate the remotest kingdoms.

Say you erect the lustiest temple, forms
spiralling from your fists, your femurs crumbling
from crouching. You'll leave your skin in dusty corridors
where the echoes of axe-bites will wreck you
like seaquakes, your veins run parchment-dry.
Your lovers will say you'd sooner devise aqueducts
than find the crusted kernel of your heart.

ABIGAIL ARDELLE ZAMMIT

*Sleeping Woman: The fertility goddess found in Maltese prehistoric temples