

The Rape of Europa

Meghan Power

Zeus emerged from the sea in the form of a gleaming white bull and came towards her, the girl of the fair cheeks. She sat on the grass, in the shade of a tree, weaving a crown of flowering aniseed. She was not startled by the giant, seemingly docile bull. She reached out her arm and he lay beside her, nibbling on the crown as she lazily caressed his brilliant, star-white hide. The bull nuzzled his nose into her soft fleshy parts and nudged her with his head towards his right flank, an invitation for her to get on his back. Once she was astride, he began to playfully trot around until he heard her laugh with pleasure. Then, the bull broke into a gallop and ran towards the sea from where he had emerged. Filled with fear, she looked back at the disappearing shoreline, she grabbed his horns and tried to force his head and steer them back to safety, but he refused to yield. Zeus' bull body was strong and wide. It steadily broke through waves, like a small but sturdy ship, until they landed on his sacred island.

Once on shore Zeus could no longer hold back his desire to possess her. He abandoned the slow, clumsy form of the bull and turned into a golden eagle, circling above her. She looked up and recognized the god of the sky. He swooped down to her, as if he were plucking a field mouse from the grass. She felt the weight of the great god on top of her. His talons clawed at her breasts shredding her wet robe that still clung to her. She was startled by the unexpected softness of his feathers on her skin. The span of his wings concealed her nakedness as he invaded her body, until his desire was sated and he left her, alone, with only the smell of rotting seaweed clinging to her skin.

The cold bites at her nose and cheeks like the sharp beak of a bird pecking at her. She stares into the sky it's a clear winter's night. She can make out Taurus above her and keeps her eyes up to the sky as she walks. The twinkling bull moves with her on this coldest of nights. The snow beneath her feet makes a hollow

crunching sound, as though she's walking on styrofoam. She looks down at the snow it twinkles like the stars above.

She stops for a moment in front of her house. He's home. She can see him, through the window. His face bloodless and pale in the flicker of an electric blue light, like a silvery moon. She looks up at the bull in the sky one more time before heading inside.

She turns her key against the familiar weight of the lock and enters, removing her heavy coat and winter boots. He remains silent, not even looking at her as she hovers for a moment behind him. She feels possessed by his silence. His silence invades her body, inhabiting her; slowly eating away at her, like salt water eating away at the unprotected hull of a ship. She wants to invade his mind, to know what he's thinking to force herself inside and penetrate his silence with a sound so violent it would tear him apart, like the shriek of hawk ripping through the stillness of night.

She goes to their room and throws herself down on the bed, like a child having a tantrum. Her tears, feel hot as they run down her still cold cheeks, filled with salt and fury, burning as they trickle into the corners of her mouth corrosive like the sea.

She imagines she's on the beach, alone, the smell of rotting seaweed clinging to her skin, surrounded by the frenzied shrieks of a descending colony of esurient seagulls. They rip and tear at her soft flesh, like she's a rotting fish left behind by the tide, until only her bones are left under the bloodless light of the moon, pale and silver, scattered across the beach, like stars seemingly strewn across the sky able to forget that she was ever here.

Jay Mosher, *And There a Bronze Nail
Stopped the Gush of Blood and
Sent It Bubbling Back Inside*, 2016,
digital c-type print on aluminum, bronze cast
mangrove leaf, zip-tie, aluminum and zinc anode,
diffuser, aniseed essential oil, Ikea table

TO: P



FROM: Z