

Miniature: The Virgin Model

Beneath the robe, her heels and toes are bare,
An introspective effigy in whose
Imaginary sandal-flat-soled shoes
No martyr nor prospective saint would dare
To walk nor work, nor lose what she would lose.
And of her mold, one might as well despair.
Below a cloak of apricot, her hair
Is parted as the Red Sea, no eyelash
To soften or obscure her doe-eyed gaze.
There is no marble in her to amaze.
The residents could call her stable trash.

O Mistress to a god you could not hold,
Touch, hear with your own ears and understand;
Inquisitive, but in the end resolved
To scandal, shame – I see you cross the sand
With bleeding, limping feet, as though on salt.
And I invoke you, formal to a fault –
That fault we share, of which we are absolved.

Jennifer Reeser