

2001

Still

Sarah Crimmins
St. John Fisher College

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Abstract

In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"The rain fell in sheets against the house, making the windows rattle. It was one of those nights in November when it was cold, but just hanging on to that last breath of fall. Jane got up from her soft, brown chair to get the fleece blanket that she kept on top of the couch, then settled back into the chair with her book. Before long, the rain lulled her away from her book and into a sound sleep."

Cover Page Footnote

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Sarah Crimmins

Still

The rain fell in sheets against the house, making the windows rattle. It was one of those nights in November when it was cold, but just hanging on to that last breath of fall. Jane got up from her soft, brown chair to get the fleece blanket that she kept on top of the couch, then settled back into the chair with her book. Before long, the rain lulled her away from her book and into a sound sleep.

Jane's dream consisted of an old museum filled with sculptures. They ranged from the odd, to the oddly normal, to the beautiful. Jane wandered through the museum, staring at and studying every sculpture she came to. She seemed to get lost in the endless hallways, bumping into something every time she turned a corner.

Suddenly, Jane couldn't move anymore. She was seated on a platform in the center of a room filled with statues of people in different poses. She tried to jump down, but couldn't move her legs. They were stuck in a crossed position, and her elbows were resting on them. Her chin was stuck to her hands. Jane was completely immobilized.

People were walking around and around her now. There were men caressing her legs and women staring at her face. They all seemed fascinated by her shape and the way she was sitting.

"She looks nice, but her nose is kind of big," one woman said.

Another woman said, "And look at her breasts...quite small, aren't they?"

"Yes," said a tall man, "but the eyes are exquisite."

Jane started to feel extremely uncomfortable, but she couldn't run from them. Groups of people were touching her and commenting on her body. The line of them seemed endless, an

she couldn't stop their wandering hands. She wanted to scream, but no sound came out.

She woke suddenly from the dream when Percy, her cat, jumped onto her lap. She tried to move her arm to shoo him away, but she couldn't. Her skin felt clammy and cold. She felt stiff and tried to stretch, but couldn't lift her arms. Jane figured they must have fallen asleep from being in an awkward crossed position while she was sleeping.

Her book had fallen to the floor next to her, and Jane tried to pick it up. Her body just wouldn't shift the right way. She started to feel trapped in her chair, almost as if she were glued there. Percy began to rub back and forth, back and forth against her legs, purring softly. Jane wanted to pet him, but her head felt too heavy to move from its place on her palms. She figured she must have been asleep for quite a while to feel this stiff. She remembered dreaming, but couldn't quite think of what the dream was about.

The grandfather clock directly across the room struck the hour. Jane glanced over to see what time it was and noticed her reflection looked pale in the glass. She looked again and noticed she didn't have any clothes on. The only thing hiding her breasts was the position of her hands. She tried to get up and cover herself, but she couldn't move. She watched her attempts in the glass. Nothing was happening. Her body was completely still. Jane was stone-faced. She tried to cry out, but it only echoed through her mind. She was bound to the chair. Left to be forever rated and scrutinized. The true destiny of every woman.
