

A grape had slipped his grasp and is fallen to the floor. ⁱ

Some way between Mercury and the bench, it glanced a tile and stopped. 45 degrees to the right of fully frontal and as we were intended to see, a cold part had called itself to rest.

It had fallen unsound. Taken as it was from a clutch of others, cast to the floor to the edge of his frame and in a manner quite apart, its bloom like the others rubbed to a finish, the grape lays face up. Still, white, hard and halved and its flesh split open, is mottled beneath and where it had until recently lived—a gap between the grapes.

A not quite circle cut from a form older than his age, and by a little larger than of life – classically-elongated and apparently yielding.

Its dust has gathered; a dull blush on its skin's apparent sheen.

Off stem and straining, a part from the others, stock-still and unshifting, the grape had split – top down and weighted it must have begun its fall. Seemingly plucked and tumbled from the right of his hand – and by the left of the Satyr boy, there himself to steady- it lies cut off and out of grasp. Though, in suspense, neither had left his place before.

Held indifferent, his hand had let it go (the grape), and there was a flatness in the way it lays.

A light weathered knuckle and softened skin. What looks like paint beneath his nail and spots upon his wrist, are scraped and nicked and age stained scores. Manifold shifts and relocations; a loosened grip upon the grape.

And the window's sun licks the floor beneath his feet, takes to his frame and colours it a little.

A bird leant in finds it unbreachable, pecks - pushing with its beak a little more to the left and into the light, the grape; its blush brushed and its skid resounding.

Deceived, the bird takes leave and an impression of warmth, the shadow passes.

Eyes down and sweeping the floor, tiles abridged by marble, head tended and her face fallen, her gaze rests upon a detail seemingly cast to the floor and casting a shadow – Helen had found her own his grape.

She finds it near, that she cannot have it and stops herself short, catching her breath and her hand in her other.

Still it has not atrophied, ripe and where the shade had past, blushed.

A study of some body most beautifulⁱⁱ, she had placed herself beside it and besides him had turned to graze his side, a figure of such flawlessly controlled disequilibrium.ⁱⁱⁱ When had he last been touched?

Left under others (feeling) eyes alone, it is only as if his is stone made flesh.

The grape - still, cold and white - she had felt to take it in, to push it plump to the roof of her mouth, urged up with her tongue and splitting. But thought better of it and closed once more her lips. There may have been a seed.

Left a little and in its place, she comes to stand in face of him, ahead of the grape, her head at his hip and - shaped as a relic - a knowingly broken member.

She finds him reeling, his gait off-axis and only outwardly unbalanced - from this angle at least. Indecorous, his is not the image of a god.

Undisturbed, Helen - of the white arms pressed soft to the side, and a dress loosely bunched - had been lowered and turned, her right arm raised, and left across her waist; she shifts her face, down upon her grape, behind hand now and at her heels. And held in vain hers more than his is the likeness of an idol.

Then shifts, sharp, and takes her hands about her skirt, she is enfolded to the floor; her right-hand, thigh placed perfect now to fall upon her (fallen) grape. Pressed upon and measured, her fingers find the tile as she meets herself her grape, gently crushed.

A blush rising in her cheeks, pushed and catching her its lip had split, second to its point of rupture. She feels it, breached and her body all of whose parts are no longer blameless.

Her gaze lifts.

His drilled eyes upturned are shy of her action.

She holds she could feel the fruit riven, turning from white and made flesh beneath her, yield to her skin, seeped through the thin creased fabric and clutching. To her thigh are two pressed pips.

Excited, its blush takes sugar and makes it wine between her legs.

ⁱ Brogi, G. (1939) *Bacchus (Detail: left hand and grapes)* [Photograph]. London, The Warburg Institute Iconographic Database.

ⁱⁱ Version of *Zeuxis Selecting Models*, to be found in: Cicero, M.T. (1952) *De Inventione* Translated by H. M. Hubbell. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 168-69

ⁱⁱⁱ Buonarroti, M. (1497) *Bacchus* [Sculpture]. Florence, Museo Nazionale del Bargello.