Tirade for the Mimic Muse

I've caught you out. You slut. You fat trout
So here you are fumed in candle-stink.
Its yellow balm exhumes you for the glass.
How you arch and pout in it!
How you poach your face in it!
Anyone would think you were a whore—
An aging out-of-work kind-hearted tart.
I know you for the ruthless bitch you are:
Our criminal, our tricoteuse, our Muse—
Our Muse of Mimic Art.

Eye shadow, swivel brushes, blushers,
Hot pinks, rouge pots, sticks,
Ice for the pores, a mud mask—
All the latest tricks.
Not one of them disguise
That there's a dead millennium in your eyes.
You try to lamp the sockets of your love.
The lives that famished for your look of love.
Your time is up. There's not a stroke, a flick
Can make your crime cosmetic.

With what drums and dances, what deceits
Rituals and flatteries of war,
Chants and pipes and witless empty rites
And war-like men
And wet-eyed patient women
You did protect yourself from horrors,
From the lizards of eyelids
From the whiskering of nipples,
From the slow betrayals of our bedroom mirrors—
How you fled

The kitchen screw and the rack of labor,
The wash thumbed and the dish cracked,
The scream of beaten women,
The crime of babies battered,
The hubbub and the shriek of daily grief
That seeks asylum behind suburb walls—
A world you could have sheltered in your skirts—
And well I know and how I see it now,
The way you latched your belt and twitched your hem
And shook it off like dirt.

And I who mazed my way to womanhood
Through all your halls of mirrors, making faces,
To think I waited on your trashy whim!
Hoping your lamp and flash,
Your glass, might show
This world I needed nothing else to know
But love and again love and again love.
In a nappy stink, by a soaking wash
Among stacked dishes
Your glass cracked,

Your luck ran out. Look. My words leap
Among your pinks, your stench pots and sticks.
They scatter shadow, swivel brushes, blushers.
Make your face naked,
Strip your mind naked,
Drench your skin in a woman's tears.
I will wake you from your slutish sleep.
I will show you true reflections, terrors.
You are the Muse of all our mirrors.
Look in them and weep.