

## **Anne Hathaway**

by Carol Ann Duffy from *The World's Wife*

*'Item I gyve unto my wife my second best bed ...'*

*(from Shakespeare's will)*

The bed we loved in was a spinning world  
of forests, castles, torchlight, clifftops, seas  
where we would dive for pearls. My lover's words  
were shooting stars which fell to earth as kisses  
on these lips; my body now a softer rhyme  
to his, now echo, assonance; his touch  
a verb dancing in the centre of a noun.

Some nights, I dreamed he'd written me, the bed  
a page beneath his writer's hands. Romance  
and drama played by touch, by scent, by taste.

In the other bed, the best, our guests dozed on,  
dribbling their prose. My living laughing love -  
I hold him in the casket of my widow's head  
as he held me upon that next best bed.