

1) first impression is that of a romance story but a wider one.
- what is their relationship?

Warming Her Pearls

for Judith Radstone

- 1 Next to my own skin, her pearls. My mistress
- 2 bids me wear them, warm them, until evening
- 3 when I'll brush her hair. At six, I place them
- 4 round her cool, white throat. All day I think of her,

- 5 resting in the ^{a big house} Yellow Room, contemplating silk
- 6 or taffeta, which gown tonight? She fans herself
- 7 whilst I work willingly, my slow heat entering
- 8 each pearl. Slack on my neck, her rope.

- 9 She's beautiful. I dream about her
- 10 in my attic bed; picture her dancing
- 11 with tall men, puzzled by my faint, persistent scent
- 12 beneath her French perfume, her milky stones.

- 13 I dust her shoulders with a rabbit's foot,
- 14 watch the soft blush seep through her skin
- 15 like an indolent sigh. In her looking-glass mirror
- 16 my red lips part as though I want to speak.

- 17 Full moon. Her carriage brings her home. I see
- 18 her every movement in my head.... Undressing,
- 19 taking off her jewels, her slim hand reaching
- 20 for the case, slipping naked into bed, the way

case for pearls

2) Speaker: the maid set in the house of the two characters
discussed her love and what their feelings are

mood: secretive and discomfort
mood changes after 17 to more anticipation and final stanza its longing

lots of sensory images with descriptions and thoughts
also use of characterization
-enjambment free verse

She doesn't as well as her mistress
as worthy
cause she doesn't feel worthy

She doesn't/can't speak

4) the speaker is in love with her mistress

2¹ she always does.... And I lie here awake,

2² knowing the pearls are cooling even now

2³ in the room where my mistress sleeps. All night

2⁴ I feel their absence and I burn.

She doesn't
feel her connection
to her mistress

Carol Ann Duffy, "Warming Her Pearls" from *Selling Manhattan*. Anvil Press Poetry Ltd.,
1987