“Barbie Doll”

By Marge Piercy, 1971 (America)

1. This girlchild was born as usual
2. and presented dolls that did pee-pee
3. and miniature GE stoves and irons
4. and wee lipsticks the color of cherry candy.
5. Then in the magic of puberty, a classmate said:
6. You have a great big nose and fat legs.
7. She was healthy, tested intelligent,
8. possessed strong arms and back,
9. abundant sexual drive and manual dexterity.
10. She went to and fro apologizing.
11. Everyone saw a fat nose on thick legs.
12. She was advised to play coy,
13. exhorted to come on hearty,
14. exercise, diet, smile and wheedle.
15. Her good nature wore out
16. like a fan belt.
17. So she cut off her nose and her legs
18. and offered them up.
19. In the casket displayed on satin she lay
20. with the undertaker's cosmetics painted on,
21. a turned-up putty nose,
22. dressed in a pink and white nightie.
23. Doesn't she look pretty? everyone said.
24. Consummation at last.
25. To every woman a happy ending.