

## EXTRACT: ANNABEL DOVER

She envisaged a house in the woods designed by Dali. It was in the shape of a womb and inside it was lined with fur. There were curves in the shape of Mae West's hips.

She beheld the bed as a mirage. It was a replica of Nelson's funeral car; luscious plumes of carved ostrich feathers held the canopy of gold and pink Egyptian carved Cherrywood. Pongee mourning dress curtains hung at each corner and the interior was a flushed peach tulle of the type his wife had worn on her soft pink nipples. Ruched up in curves, she imagined how it must have felt to rest a hot cheek in these soft swagging ripples. There were two globes, two lips, two lamps with emu feet; a Venetian depth pole with a swirl of red and white snaking up its length and holding a candle, lit every night. The bed she slept on was curved like the arch of a spine, the ceiling above her, shot glass, sprinkled with golden stars that awakened a celestial illumination at night. The walls were *eau de nil* velvet. The bathroom was made entirely of Portuguese rose marble and looked like the Amber Room in the Catherine Palace. The bathroom was as pale and smooth as single cream.

There was a collage that she knew was a Leonora Carrington. In the marbled inventory book the title was listed as 'Foundress of the Sisterhood of the Holy Little Jumping Virgins'. Wraithlike figures gathered in a discarnate landscape and two mystery twins were casting a visitor in a boat off to the underworld. She heard the dogs bark downstairs, laughter, and the door opened. Sitting in Mae West's huge lips she beheld the man: a bonfire, a double-bass, a very large bear. The walls were padded pale pink leather and studded with buttons, it was like falling into a giant pale pink blush Chesterfield.