

cont'd "Blue Ice" exercise -
actually drafting the 300 words -

The matriarch has died. As is Italian custom, mourners surround her in shrouded whispers, wafting in and out of her bedroom. Mirrors and windows covered, keeping ~~spirits in~~ a soul's only way out to be up. As she lays in _____, her only granddaughter could be found in her studio, trapping a soul to her own within the palms of her hands - assaulting a bust of _____. She would ~~not~~ sit with her grandmother in the twilight & the lamplight, the speckles of dust glittering in the room like _____.

~~the~~ marble like _____ her reflections mirrored on the black cross ~~on~~ Christina's neck ~~dangling~~

She had always believed she was alone, but had never felt it quite as acutely as she did now. Now it was just her and her dad left of the family line. She rubbed the cross, ~~set~~ which was not like her. Solid onyx, no veining, a pure black coat - thick and stable, hearty - She hated leaving her binger marks on it -

up she got to her room to polish it straightaway. ~~She~~ Hanging by her bedside, it twinkled and shone in its ~~dark~~ blackness, ~~oddly feminine~~ a paradox of beauty and strength.

The salon di artista, di Firenze would ^{annual} accept ~~or~~ show a work by one female artist this year, and the bust must be completed in less than a week and be worthy of competition. Her father had been a master mason all his life. Her mother died at childbirth. Raised by a man with sandpaper hands, she knew the gentle ~~work~~ she herself a walking contradiction - hands worn by art, roughened with work, cut by stone, she ~~was~~ had a passion for creating beauty from desolation, in possessing minimal charm, ~~and~~ an ~~even less~~ dowry ~~of~~ ^{but} unfortunate strict principle, destined her to a life of spinsterhood | Bring in black cross again