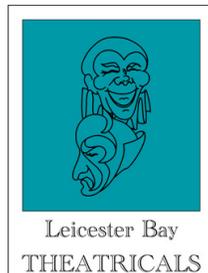


# PERUSAL SCRIPT

## AWAKENING GALATEA

A Drama in Verse  
by J.D. Newman



Newport, Maine

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**CAST of CHARACTERS** (8 Female, 1 Male, no doubling)

**PYGMALION** -- An idealistic young sculptor.

**POETRY** -- The youngest Muse who becomes Galatea.

**VENUS** -- The matronly Goddess of Love, regarded and honored by the Muses as their Queen.

**HISTORY** -- The eldest of the sister Muses

**ASTRONOMY** -- The visionary Muse

**TRAGEDY** -- The "drama queen" Muse

**COMEDY** -- The joker Muse

**DANCE** -- The jealous Muse

**MUSIC** -- Poetry's confidante

**Place:**

We are in the workshop of Pygmalion, the sculptor. The focus of the scene is a life-size statue of Galatea, the sculptor's image of an ideal woman. The space contains blocks, props, drapes, frames, and tools that will be fashioned into: Venus' shrine, a seashore, a ship at sea, and an island; all of which are created by the Muses in Pygmalion's workshop, during Pygmalion's imaginary quest.

**Time:**

In an age of heroes, philosophers, and artists.

**AWAKENING GALATEA by J.D. Newman** 90 minutes. The play is based on Ovid's story of *Pygmalion*. Pygmalion is an idealistic sculptor who creates Galatea, his statue of a perfect woman. At Venus' bidding, the seven Muses cause the creator to fall in love with his creation. The Muse of Poetry falls in love with Pygmalion and begs the Goddess of Love to allow her to appear to him and steer his passion away from the lifeless statue. Venus curses the Muse for her temerity and casts the spirit Muse into the statue of Galatea. When the other Muses beg for mercy for their sister, Venus permits them to lead the pair on a quest that will bring Galatea to life, let Poetry experience humanity, and render Pygmalion capable of selfless love. **Order #3121.**

## AWAKENING GALATEA

*AT RISE -- PYGMALION polishes Galatea. As music is played or summoned by MUSIC, the other MUSES appear and dance around PYGMALION, who is oblivious to their presence. Each MUSE, in her turn, draws PYGMALION's hands as he polishes the part of the statue that she helped him to form. COMEDY guides him as he polishes the ears, MUSIC the trunk, DANCE the limbs, HISTORY the hair, TRAGEDY the face, and ASTRONOMY the eyes. POETRY starts to help PYGMALION shape Galatea's hands, stares at PYGMALION longingly, looks at Galatea's hands, and withdraws when she notices her sisters' gazes. The music fades.*

**PYGMALION:** Galatea, you will mock humanity!

Perfection can't be found among mankind,  
Yet maidens scorned me with their vanity.  
Now you exceed the best of womankind!  
When you are polished, you will be complete  
And I will set you in the marketplace,  
Observing as the beautiful elite  
Look down when they behold your perfect face.  
I know my imperfections all too well;  
No women need remind me of my flaws.  
You'll thrust them down to share my mortal hell  
With boundless beauty breaking nature's laws.  
O Muses! Make Galatea captivate  
Imperfect maidens with her perfect state!

**HISTORY:** Pygmalion, the Muses guided you,

But with our arts, we have derided you.

**POETRY:** She's perfect...

**COMEDY:** And he's perfectly insane.

*(She taunts PYGMALION but is unheard by him.)*

Come! Play the fool in my comedies!

**TRAGEDY:** No, be the hero in my tragedies!

**ASTRONOMY:** You hapless soul! You'll never reach the stars!

**HISTORY:** *(agreeing)* A man fares better when he follows Mars!

**DANCE:** We've broken him, like dancers when they quake.

**MUSIC:** *(agreeing)* Like boy sopranos when their voices break.

**POETRY:** I rue my role in our conspiracy.

Why taunt the man with beauty?

**ASTRONOMY:** Don't you see?

He'll spread dissatisfaction in his quest  
To find perfection in the mortal sphere;  
So, we must cure him.

PERUSAL SCRIPT *Awakening Galatea* by J.D. Newman

**HISTORY:** Sister, he's possessed!

Such men prove harmful till their minds are clear.

**COMEDY:** He's made a perfect woman with our art;

When he beholds her, she'll possess his heart.

**TRAGEDY:** He'll guard Galatea from the public view.

*(To Galatea.)*

No maiden will compare herself to you.

**POETRY:** *(To PYGMALION, regretfully.)* The roughened hands I almost helped you mold

Could have embraced you in their lifeless hold.

**HISTORY:** *(To PYGMALION, tauntingly.)* The hair I helped you form will seem to hide

A memory and mystery inside.

**ASTRONOMY:** I helped you set her marble eyes aglow

Like stars to guide you where you'll never go.

**TRAGEDY:** I helped you form the features of her face

That ought to hold you captive with their grace.

**COMEDY:** Yet it's her tiny lips and open ear

That promise that she'll hush but always hear.

**MUSIC:** It's what I shaped- her bold but breathless chest-

That makes her figure better than the rest.

**DANCE:** But it's her limbs- her nimble legs and arms-

That will attract you with their graceful charms.

**POETRY:** Enough! Galatea's more than any part!

**SIX MUSES:** And seen completely, she will win his heart.

*(The MUSES draw PYGMALION back to where he can gaze at Galatea in her entirety.)*

*PYGMALION pauses a moment, the six MUSES stare at him in anticipation, and their laughter builds as he approaches the statue and kisses it. POETRY stands apart.)*

**MUSIC:** We've captured him!

**DANCE:** He's caught in his own trap!

**TRAGEDY:** Alas! What happens now?!

**COMEDY:** We laugh and clap!

**HISTORY:** He swore he'd make all women worship her.

**ASTRONOMY:** But now he is her lone idolater.

**COMEDY:** We've tamed the man who tried to use our arts

To give a statue more than human parts;

Now humankind will scorn his arrogance.

**TRAGEDY:** They'll learn from his unhappy circumstance!

**PYGMALION:** Galatea, I'm your slave! I can't escape!

With these two hands I sliced you from the stone

To mock all women with your perfect shape

And prove perfection dwells in you alone;

But you are kind'eling my dark desires

And I, who scorned the flaws of humankind,  
Now find myself engulfed in passion's fires  
For you: a statue, cold and mute and blind!

**COMEDY:** He's trapped by love!

**TRAGEDY:** Lament his slavery!

**HISTORY:** We've humbled him.

**ASTRONOMY:** He'll show temerity!

**PYGMALION:** O Venus, let me pray on bended knee

With solemn soul and free of mortal guile!

I beg you, Goddess, hear my solemn plea:

Release me from Galatea's breathless smile!

Breathe fire into my cold but perfect mate

Or turn my twisted love to healthy hate!

**MUSIC:** Will Venus heed his prayer?!

**DANCE:** He's not the first

Young man to ask our Queen to quench his thirst.

**HISTORY:** He prayed that she would give the statue life!

**ASTRONOMY:** He'll ask Galatea to become his wife!

**COMEDY:** Would that not make a perfect comedy?

*(She portrays PYGMALION vocally and physically.)*

"I'm home, my love. Why don't you come to me?

You're looking rather stiff. I'll rub your back.

Although I'm late, you never give me flack.

Now, what's for dinner? Marble cake again?!

We've had that ev'ry night since who knows when.

I'll introduce you to my friends tonight.

You're set already? Yes, your hair's just right.

Oh no, you don't look fat. I'm sure you weigh

Exactly what you did' our wedding day."

*(The MUSES, except POETRY, laugh.)*

**POETRY:** O sculptor, you are more than meets the eye;

May I not praise you with my poetry?

If I lost everything I am, could I

Convince your soul to share its life with me?

*(The other MUSES laugh.)*

**COMEDY:** A perfect imitation of the voice

That would've made Pygmalion rejoice!

**POETRY:** Pygmalion, you now hold my eyes and fate.

A Muse like me should not be drawn to you!

If you could see me in my spirit state...

But is that something you could ever do?

**TRAGEDY:** (*concerned*) Sister... say you're jesting!

**POETRY:** I'm sincere!

(*The other MUSES react.*)

Am I the only Muse who understands?

He's touched perfection with imperfect hands!

**COMEDY:** Perfection's not the only thing he's touched.

He didn't need to polish her so much.

**POETRY:** It isn't lust that makes him cherish her.

A higher force makes him her worshipper.

The man sees more than any realist

And he may be the last idealist!

His passion's misdirected, I'll admit,

But I could steer it to his benefit!

**HISTORY:** He tried to scorn all women with his art.

**ASTRONOMY:** They'll scorn him now and cure his selfish heart.

**POETRY:** Cure it of what? His hope for something more?

**COMEDY:** He's hopeless.

**POETRY:** I know what he's yearning for.

Pygmalion, I understand your quest.

There's something more than mortal in your breast.

**HISTORY:** We've each loved mortal artists in the past,

But you have seen such loves can never last!

**MUSIC:** Yet you, our youngest sister, seemed immune...

**POETRY:** (*agreeing*) No other man has ever made me swoon.

**DANCE:** Then why swoon now?! And why for one like this

Who lavishes a statue with his kiss?!

**POETRY:** O Venus, may I supplicate your Grace

To come and grant me visibility?

I call you from Olympus to this place

To let him see the Muse of Poetry!

**TRAGEDY:** Don't call to Venus! Careful what you say!

She'll curse you with fulfillment if you pray!

**POETRY:** She doesn't come. Perhaps, if we combine

Our voices, we'll be heard by the divine.

**HISTORY:** We will not help you! You have scorned us when

Your sister Muses fell for mortal men.

This human is unworthy and untried!

**MUSIC:** (*softly.*) And yet she loves him.

**HISTORY:** Do not take her side!

Will you help Poetry to plead her case?

Am I the eldest?

**MUSIC:** Yes, you fill the place

Of mother for us, since we're motherless,  
But think about our sister's happiness!

**HISTORY:** You yield to my seniority?

**MUSIC:** (*resigned.*) We do.

**HISTORY:** (*To POETRY.*) I say we shall not call the Queen with you.

**POETRY:** Will any of you join your voice with mine?

Alone, I'll not be heard by the divine!

**ASTRONOMY:** What sort sisters would we be if we

Propelled you toward a painful destiny?

**POETRY:** I must release the sculptor from his pride

And liberate the visions locked inside!

The two of us would share a special bond,

For we both seek the brighter world beyond.

**ASTRONOMY:** The brighter realm?

(*POETRY nods. Beat.*)

It's there, I'm confident.

The stars I watch are gateways we can see

But even Gods on Mount Olympus can't

Unlock the stars with any kind of key.

**POETRY:** You understand...

**ASTRONOMY:** I've sought it fervently

And men who study my astronomy

Gain glimpses in the order of the night.

They taste the stars but cannot drink their light.

**POETRY:** Pygmalion has tasted it.

**ASTRONOMY:** And you

Have tasted it. Now you are poisoned too.

**HISTORY:** Do not encourage her!

**ASTRONOMY:** Don't limit her!

The youngest Muse will yet transcend us all!

**HISTORY:** Or else divinity will make her fall.

**MUSIC:** Why not allow our Goddess to decide

If Poetry is pure or puffed with pride?

**HISTORY:** You dare oppose me?

**ASTRONOMY:** For our sister's sake.

**HISTORY:** Won't she be angry?

**POETRY:** That's a risk I'll take.

**HISTORY:** (*To POETRY.*) If we should summon Venus, what's your will?

You'd ask our Queen to make you visible?

**POETRY:** I want the man to see me, for a start...

**DANCE:** A start?!

**POETRY:** I want the man to hear my heart.

I want him to embrace me, firm and warm.

**DANCE:** He cannot touch a Muse in spirit form.

**POETRY:** I know his soul. I'm certain he'd prefer

To sense my spirit than to feel her.

**COMEDY:** That's sweet. Naïve and foolish, but it's sweet.

**POETRY:** I trust him.

**TRAGEDY:** Don't pursue the man! Retreat!

**DANCE:** She thinks that she is wiser than the rest,

So let her put her wisdom to the test.

**HISTORY:** I fear her broken heart would never mend.

*(To POETRY.)*

We will not help you do what you intend.

**POETRY:** If you won't help, I'll enter through the gate

On Mount Olympus, risking tragic fate.

*(The other MUSES react.)*

I'll do it!

**TRAGEDY:** No!

**POETRY:** I will!

**HISTORY:** *(hesitantly)* Let's do our part

And join as one to pacify her heart.

*(ASTRONOMY draws PYGMALION away from the statue and puts him to sleep.)*

**ASTRONOMY:** Young man, enamored of a woman's form:

Sleep deeply; search your dreams for one who's warm.

*(The MUSES enact a ritual of supplication.)*

**SEVEN MUSES:** O Great Venus, the mistress of all human love

We have joined as your Muses to supplicate you:

We beseech you to hear on Olympus above

And appear in the midst of your true retinue.

*(VENUS appears with a flourish.)*

O hail, Venus, Goddess of men's hearts.

**VENUS:** I greet you, Muses, and salute your arts-

The careful record books of History...

The upward looks of fair Astronomy...

The frowns and furrowed brows of Tragedy...

The smiles and silly smirks of Comedy...

The sturdy stance of Dance, secure and strong...

The soothing sound and sense of Music's song...

And last, the searching eyes of Poetry-

So tell me why you've joined to summon me.

**HISTORY:** A mortal artist dares to seek your Grace.

**COMEDY:** Pygmalion!

**VENUS:** Oh, chase him from this place!

All young men pray to gain their lover's eye

Lest they should perish. Lovers rarely die.

**ASTRONOMY:** But this one's different.

**MUSIC:** He loves a stone.

**VENUS:** Intriguing! I will speak with him alone!

**DANCE:** He prayed that you'd breathe life into her frame...

**TRAGEDY:** Or blow away his ill-directed flame.

**VENUS:** A Goddess cannot grant a stone a soul.

And even I can't make his statue whole.

The statue lacks the seven gifts of life.

I cannot make it live, despite his strife.

**POETRY:** Then make him see me and I will attempt

To change his heated love to cold contempt.

**VENUS:** A passion like the one he manifests

Cannot be overcome. It never rests

Till something else becomes its focal point.

**POETRY:** Then let him see and hear me. Go anoint

His eyes and ears; he'll love a Muse for life.

**COMEDY:** If not, he'll take a statue as his wife.

**VENUS:** I'll draw a mortal maiden to his side

If he is wise, he'll seek her as his bride.

**ASTRONOMY:** No woman meets Galatea's excellence.

**MUSIC:** No being but a Muse could clear his sense.

**VENUS:** But Poetry, you're glorious!

**DANCE:** (*To VENUS, indicating Galatea.*) Although

She pales against your beauty.

**VENUS:** Even so,

If mortals got a glimpse of too much light,

They'd think that Mount Olympus was their right!

**POETRY:** Then make me something greater than a Muse.

**HISTORY:** As Muses, we inspire men with art

And men's creations light humanity;

What greater state could deity impart?

**POETRY:** The state of the creators.

**VENUS:** Blasphemy!

**POETRY:** The Muses shape the statues of the tombs

But women make live humans in their wombs.

**MUSIC:** You wish to be a mortal woman?!

**POETRY:** Yes!

I'd suffer death for mortal happiness!

**HISTORY:** You seek a wider sphere and yet you'd be

Confined to earth and crude mortality?

**DANCE:** You'd sacrifice the bliss that now is ours?

**POETRY:** Humanity alone unlocks the stars.

**TRAGEDY:** You've fondled truths the Roman Gods won't touch!

**ASTRONOMY:** She can't turn back. She loves the light too much.

**VENUS:** (*To POETRY.*) The poets need your spirit in their midst;

Content yourself with how you now exist.

**POETRY:** For centuries, I've guided poets' quills

And sharpened their ideas and writing skills.

I've helped them write romantic poetry

And hymns in honor of divinity,

And ballads of the human heroes' deeds

With beauty that no other art exceeds.

But in my soul, I know I can be more

Than any other Muse has been before.

**VENUS:** I will not make your spirit incarnate

You'd try to steal my glory in that state.

**POETRY:** You're jealous of me?! That's the real bar!

Assist me or I'll tell them who you are.

**COMEDY:** No, sister! Leave us out of all of this!

**TRAGEDY:** Appease her now and offer her a kiss!

**VENUS:** (*To POETRY.*) Don't threaten me! I am your mighty Queen!

**POETRY:** You're more than that.

(*Beat.*)

Yes, you know what I mean.

**VENUS:** You are imagining...

**POETRY:** I read your eyes

Which cannot cover up your spoken lies.

And as I've searched among the stars, I've seen

The noble doings of our mighty Queen.

**VENUS:** You're more than mortal, but you're not divine;

Do not divulge the secrets that are mine!

**POETRY:** I'll tell my sisters and I'll tell your groom!

I'll tell them what you've done and tell with whom!

**COMEDY:** We do not wish to hear forbidden things!

**TRAGEDY:** A hornet, when she's cornered, always stings!

**VENUS:** I warn you, Poetry, avoid my wrath!

You're treading on a high and slipp'ry path.

**POETRY:** Then make me human and I'll say no more  
And all will be the way it was before.

**HISTORY:** Don't play with fire or you shall be burned!

**POETRY:** *(To VENUS.)* So sear my mind of ev'rything I've learned!  
Just make me human and I will forget  
The things I've seen you do that you regret.

**VENUS:** You think you'll win if you provoke my ire?  
That I'll consume you with a mortal fire?

**POETRY:** Galatea hardly hides her sacred parts,  
But she's less shameless than the Queen of Hearts.

**VENUS:** So be it!  
*(Smoke surrounds POETRY and Galatea.)*

**SIX MUSES:** Venus, no!

**VENUS:** Receive my curse!  
I'll grant your wish, since there is nothing worse!  
I'll tear the gifts of living from your soul.  
You want a human form? I'll make it so!

*(POETRY screams as she disappears in the smoke. As the other MUSES clear away it away, they discover that POETRY has disappeared from view, with only the statue of Galatea remaining. On the ground around the statue, there are seven objects that represent the seven gifts of living. POETRY's spirit has been fused with Galatea's body and she will now be referred to as Galatea.)*

**MUSIC:** What have you done to her?

**VENUS:** What she desired.  
Her spirit is now beautif'ly attired.  
I dressed her in Galatea's body.

**MUSIC:** No!

**VENUS:** What greater blessing could a God bestow?  
She sought to have her substance seen and felt,  
So now she wears the statue like a pelt.

**ASTRONOMY:** She's trapped in stone?!

**VENUS:** Her spirit is encased  
In human shape!

**COMEDY:** Absurd!

**TRAGEDY:** A tragic waste!

**HISTORY:** You've made our sister lifeless and you stole  
The Seven Gifts of Living from her soul?!

**VENUS:** *(Indicating the objects at Galatea's feet.)* I've stolen nothing; all her gifts are there,  
Transformed to tokens of the mortal sphere.

**COMEDY:** *(Picking up a mask.)* Her self expression...

**MUSIC:** *(Picking up a necklace of sea-shells.)* And her honest voice...

**ASTRONOMY:** *(Picking up a shiny object.)* The noble vision that informed her choice...

**DANCE:** (*Picking up a bottle of oil.*) Our sister sacrificed mobility...

**HISTORY:** (*Picking up a book.*) Her memory...

**TRAGEDY:** (*Picking up a wine-skin.*) And sensitivity.

**VENUS:** (*Picking up a pair of ear-rings.*) Half physical, half spirit, you can hold

These gifts she lost that can't be bought or sold.

**HISTORY:** May we restore them to her?

**VENUS:** Only when

She's lived a lifetime in the world of men.

*(She places the ear-rings on Galatea's ears.)*

While you are frozen, live within your mind

And you will be awakened in good time.

But for the moment, I will let you hear

What humans utter in Galatea's ear.

**MUSIC:** Sweet Poetry...

**VENUS:** She is Galatea now.

**MUSIC:** (*To VENUS.*) Is mercy something you cannot allow?

**TRAGEDY:** Don't offend our Queen!

**MUSIC:** You silenced her!

Do you regret what you have done to her?

**VENUS:** I acted justly.

**ASTRONOMY:** I do not agree.

**DANCE:** And I don't either.

**HISTORY:** Speak respectfully!

**TRAGEDY:** Do not oppose her! Goddesses are strong!

**COMEDY:** No matter what she says, just play along!

**VENUS:** Unfortunate it had to come to this,

But all I did was grant her greatest wish.

**MUSIC:** Allow us to restore her gifts of life

And make her human... let her be his wife!

**VENUS:** She must be punished for audacity.

**MUSIC:** So she will suffer in mortality?

**VENUS:** Give me her gifts or you will share her fate!

*(MUSIC conceals her gift and turns her back to VENUS. ASTRONOMY and DANCE follow suit, followed more reluctantly by TRAGEDY and COMEDY. HISTORY faces VENUS, who is astonished.)*

**HISTORY:** They love their sister.

*(Beat.)*

**VENUS:** I'll... negotiate.

I need my Muses. I've lost Poetry.

I'll pardon you for contradicting me.

*(The MUSES turn to VENUS enthusiastically and surround her.)*

**MUSIC:** You gave your gift and said that she would hear

The human voices in her stony ear.  
If we bestow these gifts, will she not be  
Endowed with life and true humanity?

**VENUS:** (*nodding*) If all the gifts are given in this form  
They'll make her body human, soft and warm.  
She'll hear and feel, speak and move and see.  
Bestow all gifts...

*(She gestures at the book HISTORY holds.)*

Except her memory.

**HISTORY:** (*Retaining the book.*) Without her memory, she will not know  
Who any of us are!

**VENUS:** It must be so.

She must forget the life she led before  
Or she will be unable to learn more.

**HISTORY:** (*She hands the book to VENUS.*) I'll withhold it for her good, though I suspect  
You fear the secrets she might recollect.

**ASTRONOMY:** She'll be a lovely woman.

**MUSIC:** Yes...

**DANCE:** ...and yet

No rival to the standard that you set.

**VENUS:** Indeed!

**DANCE:** Why should a Goddess be afraid  
Of any un-exalted mortal maid?

**VENUS:** I'm not afraid! Don't be ridiculous!

**DANCE:** She's no more lovely than the rest of us.

**VENUS:** He'll lose his love if she's won easily,  
So you must wake each trait successively.

**COMEDY:** Let's lead the artist on a fool's quest,  
And she'll become more human with each test!

**TRAGEDY:** Yet in the world, Galatea won't be safe!  
She's lovely but defenseless as a waif!

**VENUS:** Then keep the artist in a waking dream;  
And in his workshop, you must make it seem  
As if he's gone to Cyprus, crossed the sea,  
And climbed Parnass in his reality.  
Come, Muses. You'll appear to be my shrine  
On Cyprus, where I first emerged from brine.

**HISTORY:** The man can't see or hear us.

**VENUS:** Never fear.

*(She touches PYGMALION's eyes and ears.)*

Now he'll perceive you with his eye and ear.

**PERUSAL SCRIPT Awakening Galatea by J.D. Newman**

*(She touches the MUSES' hands individually.)*

I'll let your spirit hands move to and fro  
The mortal objects in his studio.

**DANCE:** *(As VENUS touches her hands.)* You give me freely what she wanted most?

**VENUS:** I must. He can't perceive you as a ghost.

**ASTRONOMY:** *(Working her spell on PYGMALION.)* When you arise, young artist, you will dream  
Reality is what we make it seem.

**VENUS:** I'll play the Priestess.

**DANCE:** You will blind his eyes!

**VENUS:** Then cloak my glory with a plain disguise.

**DANCE:** But still, you will exceed all loveliness.

He'll fall for you, no matter how your dress.

**VENUS:** I'll play a Vestal Priestess, pure and chaste,  
Avenged by Gods if I should be disgraced.

**SIX MUSES:** *(In chorus or with lines divided among them.)* O veil ev'ry glory of her soul,  
And straighten ev'ry curve and fade her dull.  
O dress her in a gown of wool and flax,  
And brush her fingers till they're coarse as wax.

*(The MUSES form themselves into a shrine.)*

**VENUS:** Arise, Pygmalion. Divinity  
Has heard your plea and I will answer it.

**PYGMALION:** Where am I?

**VENUS:** You're on Cyprus with your love.

**PYGMALION:** A maiden with such music in her voice  
Could nullify un-natural desires.  
O Venus!

*(VENUS looks concerned that the sculptor has seen through her disguise until PYGMALION turns his gaze skyward.)*

You've shared beauty with this maid!  
Galatea even pales by compare.

*(To VENUS.)*

I'll prove I'm worthy of your ev'ry grace.

**VENUS:** Self-centered soul! You think the world revolves  
Around your yearning for a perfect mate?  
I wasn't sent here as an offering.  
I am a Vestal Priestess and I keep  
The sacred torch of Vesta burning bright.  
I pray for wives who taste what I forego,  
And those who would be better off like me.

**PYGMALION:** You are a fury, sent to torment me  
By taunting me with what I'll never hold.

**VENUS:** I serve as a reminder to all men  
Of the beauty they may find within their wives.

**PYGMALION:** I'll leave you now, lest I should be accused  
Of courting you and suffer Vesta's wrath  
*(He starts to leave.)*

**VENUS:** *(laughing)* So you're the one they call Pygmalion?  
I'm rather disappointed, honestly...

**PYGMALION:** *(He turns back, hurt and offended.)* In what way have I disappointed you?

**VENUS:** *(She circles PYGMALION, scrutinizingly.)* Why, one would think the man who wants a wife  
More perfect than mortality provides  
Would imitate Apollo's handsomeness...  
But you are quite an ordinary soul  
With features clearly lacking here and there.  
An av'rage face, no better than most men's...  
A body of proportions less than fine...  
A voice no more enchanting than my own...

**PYGMALION:** I never claimed my passionate desires  
Were tempered by my rationality.  
My passion is a plague, a raging fire  
Which burns my flesh, consumes my ev'ry thought,  
And drives me running with a double aim:  
To find catharsis and a remedy.  
Venus lit the flame! Give her the blame!

**VENUS:** Do not blame her! Galatea lit your light,  
And you're the oil that keeps it burning bright!  
A greater soul might merit miracles,  
But you're a common man with common lust...

**PYGMALION:** You speak as if you sway divinity.

**VENUS:** The mighty Goddess whom I've sworn to serve  
Has favored me above all Priestesses.  
My word is sacred, and she grants to me  
The power to fulfill my prophesies.  
If I believed that you felt something more  
Than manly ego, pride, and arrogance...

**PYGMALION:** It's true. In the beginning, I desired  
To scorn imperfect maids with perfect form...

*(Beat.)*

But when I saw her... it was me she mocked.  
She filled my flesh with hopeless lust...

*(Beat.)*

Yet what I feel now is... different.

**VENUS:** (scornfully.) Of course it is! No other human soul  
Has been affected by a greater love!

**PYGMALION:** It's more than love! It's something higher!

**VENUS:** (*dubiously*) Oh?!

**PYGMALION:** My passion isn't for the form she wears...  
As much as for the source from which it sprang.

**VENUS:** You yearn to find her quarry?

**PYGMALION:** No, not quite...  
(*He struggles to explain.*)

Perfection like Galatea's can't exist  
In human places. She is from the plane  
Of perfect forms that ancient minds once sought.

**VENUS:** Your mind shows promise, for a mortal male,  
But would you love her if she were alive?

**PYGMALION:** Indeed! More than the stars! More than my life!

**VENUS:** You think you speak the truth, but time will tell.  
A real woman could surprise a man.  
She'll speak her mind and walk a different course.  
She'll see and hear things in her special way,  
And when you think you understand your love,  
She'll contradict your ev'ry certainty.  
A lifeless stone might make you happier.

**PYGMALION:** Most gracious Priestess, may Galatea live?!

**VENUS:** If you accept my challenge... yes, she may.  
(*PYGMALION reacts.*)

Go sail to Mount Parnass, and on your quest,  
She will awaken as you pass each test.  
(*Admonishingly, almost threateningly.*)

Allow her to achieve humanity  
Or you'll be lifeless for eternity!

**PYGMALION:** I'll sail for Mount Parnass this very night;  
Galatea, there you'll blaze with living light!

(*PYGMALION exits, leaving Galatea behind. The MUSES emerge from the shrine shape.*)

**TRAGEDY:** He has forgotten something!

**COMEDY:** Yes. His head.

He thought we'd take her there?!

**VENUS:** He never said.

I said he'd find his love on Mount Parnass.

**TRAGEDY:** He thought you'd carry her?

**VENUS:** He didn't ask!

Your sister's fate depends upon a man

Who proved a fool before his quest began.  
The sculptor, who at first appeared inept.  
Showed promise, but his promise wasn't kept.

**MUSIC:** It's still too early to abandon hope.

He may improve before he climbs the slope.

**VENUS:** Go show the absent-minded man his error

And make him worry with a mortal terror!

**DANCE:** He's "questing" forward.

**HISTORY:** What do we do now?!

**VENUS:** You each must test them.

**HISTORY:** Test them?

**VENUS:** Yes.

**HISTORY:** But how?

**VENUS:** The way you try the pair is up to you

But don't bestow your gift till they prove true.

**ASTRONOMY:** He's fashioning a ship! He'll cross the sea!

**HISTORY:** Will he believe us?

**COMEDY:** If you follow me.

Remove her from his sight till we're prepared.

**VENUS:** I will return to see how you have fared.

*(VENUS exits with a flourish. The MUSES conceal the gifts they bear. COMEDY, HISTORY, ASTRONOMY, and TRAGEDY take Galatea offstage while MUSIC and DANCE remain.)*

**MUSIC:** Our Queen will let him see us, although she

Refused to let him gaze on Poetry.

**DANCE:** She cloaked his vision or we'd blind his eyes

With beauty.

**MUSIC:** Is it only Poetry

Who rivals Venus?

**DANCE:** No more so than me!

*(PYGMALION appears with various objects from his studio, either bringing a rolling platform to serve as the base of the ship or using the stage area itself as the base and augmenting it with the objects he brings on stage. The other MUSES return.)*

**ASTRONOMY:** When we present ourselves, he'll see us.

**HISTORY:** Wait!

**ASTRONOMY:** It's time to let our sister meet her fate.

**HISTORY:** Can anyone progress without a past?

She's like a ship at sea without a mast.

Sweet Poetry...

**ASTRONOMY:** Galatea...

**HISTORY:** Who is she

If she cannot recall her history?

**ASTRONOMY:** She's free to fly where winds have never blown.

**HISTORY:** Perhaps, but will she journey there alone?

**COMEDY:** She'll travel with her lover, hapless clown!

**TRAGEDY:** A tragic hero, worthy of renown!

Don't make a mockery of him!

**COMEDY:** Why not?

He couldn't be content with what he's got.

If he should lose his love, his name, his art...

**TRAGEDY:** (*She nods understandingly.*) He'll be much wiser once she breaks his heart.

**COMEDY:** In tragedy, the failed hero learns;

In comedy, when foiled, he returns

And makes the same mistakes in my next plot.

It's really rather tragic, is it not?

**TRAGEDY:** Our sister is at stake!

**COMEDY:** My comic test

Will help the fool claim his foolishness...

**TRAGEDY:** (*Again in agreement with COMEDY's plan.*) And humanize him!

**COMEDY:** Take your places.

**HISTORY:** What are we to be?

**COMEDY:** A troupe of comic actors. Play along with Comedy!

*(The MUSES strike a pose.)*

Are you the fool they call Pygmalion?

**PYGMALION:** Perhaps I am, depending who you are.

**COMEDY:** I've heard you made a woman out of stone

And played with her as if she were your doll.

*(The MUSES laugh.)*

**PYGMALION:** I'm on a quest to bring my love to life.

**COMEDY:** And where's your love?

**PYGMALION:** She'll be on Mount Parnass.

**COMEDY:** I see, and who will take her there?

**PYGMALION:** The Goddesses will spirit her away,

Like Agamemnon's daughter.

**COMEDY:** Are you sure?

**PYGMALION:** I left her at the shrine.

**COMEDY:** A lovely thing,

But heavier than it appears to be.

*(The MUSES laugh.)*

**PYGMALION:** (alarmed) You found her at the altar?!

**COMEDY:** Possibly.

I lead a troupe of six comediennes.

We search the world for new material,

Though marble's not exactly what we sought.

**PYGMALION:** You have Galatea?! Give her back to me!

**FIVE MUSES:** Finders keepers!

**PYGMALION:** I will give my life...

**COMEDY:** Just give us audience. Sit down and see  
How you've inspired our latest comedy.

**PYGMALION:** A Vestal Priestess ordered me to go  
And climb the highest peak of Mt. Parnass!

**COMEDY:** Then go and find the Muses' dwelling place,  
But do you want to be there all alone?

**PYGMALION:** Where is she?!

**COMEDY:** We might give her back to you  
But first see if our comedy rings true.

**PYGMALION:** I'll watch, but only if you promise me  
That you'll return Galatea to my care.

**COMEDY:** I promise, on my honor as a clown:  
We'll bring her here when we have brought you down.

*(The MUSES strike a series of tableau's.)*

*(First tableau: PYGMALION woos a real woman.)*

Give audience! Behold our comic tale  
Of one whose lust could not be satisfied  
Except by women ev'ry man would hail...

*(Second tableau: PYGMALION is scorned by a woman he wooed.)*

Who scorned him when he sought one as his bride.

*(Third tableau: PYGMALION sculpts Galatea.)*

So in revenge, he carved, in solitude,  
A statue of a woman who surpassed  
The near perfection of the ones he wooed,  
Whose transitory beauty couldn't last.

*(Fourth tableau: PYGMALION kisses Galatea.)*

Before he put his statue on display,  
He lavished it with kisses night and day.

*(Fifth tableau: PYGMALION prays for VENUS to bring Galatea to life.)*

He took his stone to Cyprus where he prayed  
For Venus to breathe life into the maid.  
Attend our humble show and judge if he  
Belongs in tragedy or comedy.

**PYGMALION:** It's obvious you'll play me as a fool!

*(COMEDY steps into role. Note the change to triple verse, i.e. three syllables per foot. Galatea and other elements in the playlet may be established through pantomime or with the use of props from the studio.)*

**COMEDY:** (*AS PYGMALION*) When my statue's completed, all women will see  
That Galatea is shaped the way they ought to be!

**DANCE:** (*She appears, striking poses.*) I am here as your model, so how shall I pose?  
As a dancer, my disciplined body may hold  
The position you wish for an hour or a day.  
Tell me how I shall stand to be captured in clay.

**COMEDY:** Though your limbs are well-shaped and are pleasingly slender...  
Your body and face aren't the best of your gender.

**DANCE:** I'm a dancer! My body's my only device.  
I'm familiar with all of its virtue and vice.  
Overall, I may modestly say you won't find  
A more excellent sample in all womankind.

**COMEDY:** (*Posing like PYGMALION.*) Stand like so! No, like this! Be a mirror of me!

**DANCE:** (*scornfully*) Perhaps you ought to pose. You stand so gracefully!

**TRAGEDY:** What an honor to pose for you, Pygmalion!  
See, the paint on my face has been perfectly done!

**COMEDY:** Yes, you're sweet as the morning and soft as a rose.  
Now lie down on this bench with these straws up your nose.

**TRAGEDY:** But my face...

**COMEDY:** ... will be covered in plaster and hold  
All your youthful perfection when you have grown old.

**TRAGEDY:** I'll be captured forever in immortal youth!  
I'll endure what I must...

*(The plaster is poured and TRAGEDY's voice is muffled, but the verse pattern comes through.)*

...mmm mmm MMM mmm mmm MMM!

**COMEDY:** (*AS PYGMALION*) Do not speak. You will ruin the shape of your lips.

**DANCE:** I just might ruin yours.

**COMEDY:** Show me more of your hips.

**HISTORY:** I am here... but these others...

**COMEDY:** I just need your hair.  
Stand behind the fair dancer. Pose right over there.

**HISTORY:** Fine, but why...

**COMEDY:** Hide your face if you want to be paid.

**HISTORY:** Money talks. You will find I'm a sensible maid.

**ASTRONOMY:** Do you need me today?

**COMEDY:** Yes, just open your eyes.  
Open wide!

**ASTRONOMY:** Will they do?

**COMEDY:** They're not quite the same size.

**ASTRONOMY:** If I squint...

**COMEDY:** I'll adapt. Eyes are hardest of all.

They are brilliant, but one is a little too small.

**MUSIC:** Here I am!

**COMEDY:** Stand at profile.

**MUSIC:** If you prefer.

**DANCE:** Can anyone guess why the sculptor chose her?

**PYGMALION:** (*THE REAL ONE*) I treated models as all artists do!

**COMEDY:** (*AS PYGMALION*) Did I mention to you that I only can pay

The equivalent wage of one model today?

I am sculpting Galatea from all your best parts,

But the rest is un-rendered. We're poor in the arts.

**ASTRONOMY, HISTORY, AND DANCE:** (*They lift COMEDY.*) Throw the sculptor in plaster!

**MUSIC:** What if the man smothers?

**DANCE:** Then the sculptor won't live to harass any others.

**TRAGEDY:** (*In the same distinct verse pattern.*) mmm mmm MMM mmm mmm MMM mmm mmm MMM  
mmm mmm MMM mmm!

**PYGMALION:** (*THE REAL ONE*) Enough of this! Your little comedy

Presents a sculptor who is not like me!

*(The MUSES, except for COMEDY, circle PYGMALION.)*

**DANCE:** She mocks all women with her perfect form.

**PYGMALION:** The women mocked me first. It was revenge!

**ASTRONOMY:** She'll prove perfection dwells in her alone.

**HISTORY:** What makes you worthy of a perfect mate?

**PYGMALION:** Perfection's what I seek; she'll lead me there!

**MUSIC:** She'll scorn the flaws of all of womankind...

**TRAGEDY:** But are you man enough to win her hand?

**PYGMALION:** (*In an outburst.*) It's true! I've been a cruel hearted fool!

*(Beat.)*

I claim your comedy. You got it right.

**COMEDY:** Company, stop! We've accomplished our purposes.

*(The MUSES, except COMEDY, exit. PYGMALION poses as he did when he tried to get the models to imitate him and assumes Galatea's pose.)*

**PYGMALION:** What a tyrant I was... "Be a mirror of me!"

*(PYGMALION holds the pose and begins to laugh at himself, with shame and sadness. Meanwhile, Galatea, is brought on stage by the MUSES. Galatea is now played by the same actress who played POETRY and her costume, make-up, and frozen pose make her resemble the statue. PYGMALION does not yet notice her.)*

**PYGMALION:** I thought I could express myself through art...

But all my models had expressions too.

I treated them as statues.

**COMEDY:** Yes, you did...

*(PYGMALION notices Galatea.)*

**PERUSAL SCRIPT Awakening Galatea by J.D. Newman**

Treat this one as a woman and she'll live.

*(COMEDY places the mask, the gift of expression, over Galatea's face and, with sleight-of-hand, makes it disappear, as if it has melted into Galatea's face. Galatea begins to laugh and alters her pose to express her emotion.)*

**PYGMALION:** Galatea! You've changed...

*(The laughter continues and PYGMALION's reaction shifts from delight to dismay.)*

You're mocking me!

**COMEDY:** She laughs with joy. My gift of comedy

Grants physical expression, laughter too;

And now Galatea can respond to you.

*(Galatea stops laughing and her expression and pose changes. Tears almost flow from her eyes.)*

**PYGMALION:** *(To Galatea.)*

I'm sorry I was egotistical.

*(To COMEDY.)*

Your comedy has worked a magic spell.

It granted self-expression to my love.

**COMEDY:** She hears you, since you opened up your ears.

She shows expression, since you care to see.

So tell her that you love her.

**PYGMALION:** *(to Galatea.)* Yes! I do!

*(Galatea's expression and posture changes. From this point on, Galatea will continue to shift to different frozen poses to express her changing emotions.)*

**COMEDY:** Did she respond?

**PYGMALION:** It seems she loves me back.

Galatea, can you speak?

**MUSIC:** She needs my gift.

**PYGMALION:** What is it?

**MUSIC:** It's a necklace that I made

From seashells strewn on seven sandy shores

Each echoing the music of the waves.

**PYGMALION:** And that will give her voice?

**MUSIC:** She has a voice;

My gift allows you to perceive her words.

**GALATEA:** Pygmalion!

**PYGMALION:** That is Galatea's sound!

I've heard it in my dreams since childhood!

Are you alive?

**GALATEA:** I live within the stone.

I cannot see you...

**PYGMALION:** I am here.

**GALATEA:** I know.

**PYGMALION:** And I am your creator. Feel my hand!

**GALATEA:** I cannot feel beyond my fingertips.

**PYGMALION:** You will, Galatea. On my word, you will!

*(To COMEDY.)*

You helped her. Thank you.

**COMEDY:** Am I generous?

I've only made your life more humorous.

*(The MUSES place Galatea on the ship.)*

**PYGMALION:** Galatea, I assumed divinity

Would spirit you away to Mount Parnass.

I now know I must take you there myself,

But we will find our happiness at last!

*(MUSIC summons or plays music and evokes sea-sounds while DANCE directs her sisters in a dance that makes the MUSES appear as the sails and waves. PYGMALION, on his ship, launches into the sea and takes the helm. He is unable to see Galatea behind him.)*

**MUSES:** We're the sails! We're the winds! We're the waves of the sea!

**MUSIC:** We're the whispering voices of men's fantasy.

**MUSES:** We call artists like sailors on perilous quests...

**MUSIC:** And we draw them like loadstones and give them no rest.

**MUSES:** Journey on to the shore where Galatea may wake...

**MUSIC:** And may live for herself...

**MUSES:** And not just for your sake.

*(The wind sounds subside, but MUSIC plays or summons a softer music to underscore the following dialogue. DANCE continues to guide her sisters in smaller movements, either from in front of them or from inside the ensemble.)*

**GALATEA:** Where are you, my creator?

**PYGMALION:** Here!

**GALATEA:** What should I call you? Sculptor? Father? God?

**PYGMALION:** Much more than "sculptor," I would hope,

And fatherhood is hardly what I sought,

But someday "husband" may become my name...

**GALATEA:** For now it doesn't fit.

*(Beat.)*

**PYGMALION:** "Pygmalion."

**GALATEA:** Is that your name?

**PYGMALION:** It means "the little lion."

**GALATEA:** Little Lion, tell me where we are.

**PYGMALION:** We're on the sea... a cold and empty place.

**GALATEA:** I hear no other voices.

**PYGMALION:** This is the emptiness that we must cross

To reach the shore that leads to Mount Parnass...

**PERUSAL SCRIPT Awakening Galatea by J.D. Newman**

And choruses of voices echo there.

*(MUSIC hovers about Galatea, counterfeiting her voice. She may continue to play an instrument, if she has been doing so already. PYGMALION doesn't look back, so the deception is relatively easy to accomplish.)*

**MUSIC:** *(Imitating Galatea's voice.)* They never could distract me from your own.

I'll only hear and heed the words you say!

**PYGMALION:** Then we will live in perfect harmony!

**GALATEA:** I didn't speak! That was another voice!

**MUSIC:** I've heard of sirens, lurking hereabout,

Who lure the sailors with their tempting songs.

**PYGMALION:** But where would you have heard...

**GALATEA:** I've heard no tales!

**PYGMALION:** But you just said...

**GALATEA:** Pygmalion, beware!

Another creature counterfeits my speech!

**PYGMALION:** There's no one else.

**MUSIC:** Then I imagined it.

Pygmalion could never be deceived.

**GALATEA:** She's still deceiving you!

**MUSIC:** The wretched soul!

**PYGMALION:** Galatea, are there one of you or two?

**GALATEA:** A true voice and a false one. Judge my words!

**MUSIC:** I'd never doubt the wisdom of my love.

**GALATEA:** You're wise, but not too wise to be deceived!

**PYGMALION:** Perhaps you're right- the one of you who said

That I've been duped by someone's trickery.

**GALATEA:** That's right! Do not believe her flattery!

*(DANCE makes the MUSES rock the boat, keeping PYGMALION at the helm.)*

**PYGMALION:** The sea is growing rough and treacherous!

**MUSIC:** It's calling you into a better place.

**PYGMALION:** The brighter realm... it's buried in the sea?

**MUSIC:** You're brilliant! You have guessed a guarded truth!

The world below is waiting for a man

With vision that transcends humanity.

**PYGMALION:** An underwater kingdom?

**MUSIC:** O how wise

You are, Pygmalion...

**GALATEA:** Beware!

Don't listen to the siren! You will drown!

**MUSIC:** Just throw me overboard. I'll lead you down.

**GALATEA:** You'll lose me to the sea!

**MUSIC:** You know what's best.

**GALATEA:** Pygmalion, you'll fail the crucial test!

**PYGMALION:** I'll take that risk!

**GALATEA:** Then you're a foolish soul!

**MUSIC:** Your love would not insult you.

**PYGMALION:** Yes, I know.

**MUSIC:** Now come with me! They'll make us royalty.

**PYGMALION:** I knew you'd lead me to my destiny!

**GALATEA:** You are not ready for the other realm;

Your destiny lies in mortality.

Go forward, Little Lion, hold the helm

And seek a burdened life beyond the sea.

**PYGMALION:** An honest voice will tell the painful truth;

I'll heed your words.

**MUSIC:** You're wiser than a youth.

*(The MUSES let the ship settle into a smoother course so that PYGMALION can turn behind him and approach Galatea.)*

**PYGMALION:** You contradicted me!

**GALATEA:** I spoke my mind!

**PYGMALION:** You could have been more kind!

**GALATEA:** I saved your life!

*(MUSIC appears to PYGMALION, still playing her instrument if she was doing so before. She sings her lines to PYGMALION, either accompanied or a' cappella.)*

**PYGMALION:** Are you the siren? Leave my ship at once!

**MUSIC:** I've served a mission for divinity.

I tested you to see if you would heed

An honest woman's voice in time of need.

**PYGMALION:** I heeded it.

**MUSIC:** But you rebuked her.

**PYGMALION:** Yes.

That doesn't mean I love her any less.

She spoke the truth, but didn't have to say

The things she said in such a haughty way!

**MUSIC:** You love to hear the sound of your own voice.

*(She removes the necklace from Galatea.)*

I'll make her mute again, if that's your choice.

**PYGMALION:** No wait! I'm wrong! Galatea, I repent

Of all I said. Your words are heaven-sent!

**21 more pages of script**