

Contents

The Myth of Niobe	ix
How the Myth Was Handed Down	x
Dramatis Personae	xiii
Niobe Speaks as an Abyssinian Woman	xiv
A Niobe Poem by David Ignatow	xv

Scene 1: The Gods / The Myth / The Accident

The Little King	3
The Gods Are Optional	4
Afterwards Apollo	5
But Artemis	6
The Death of the Niobids	8

Scene 2: Before the Accident / A Family Romance

Tenderness	13
<i>Jeunes mères</i>	14
Perfect	16
Child Abuse	17
Thief	18
Ménage à trois	20
Her Body	24
Bathing	25
Precious	26

Scene 3: After the Accident / The Funeral

After Pain Passes	31
The Bedspread	32
Final Visit	33
The Poem	34
“I Was Afraid of Him”	35
Lying Down	37
Still Lying Down	39
Before the Funeral	40
After the Funeral	41

Scene 4: The End of the Story / A New Narration / A New Niobe

The First Day of the Rest of Her Life	45
Niobe of the Painting	46
Sorrow Figure	47
Ethiopia	48
Bus Ride	49
War Photograph	50

The Fire Mystery	51
Ars Poetica	53
The New Niobe	55
Epilogue	57

Notes	59
-------	----