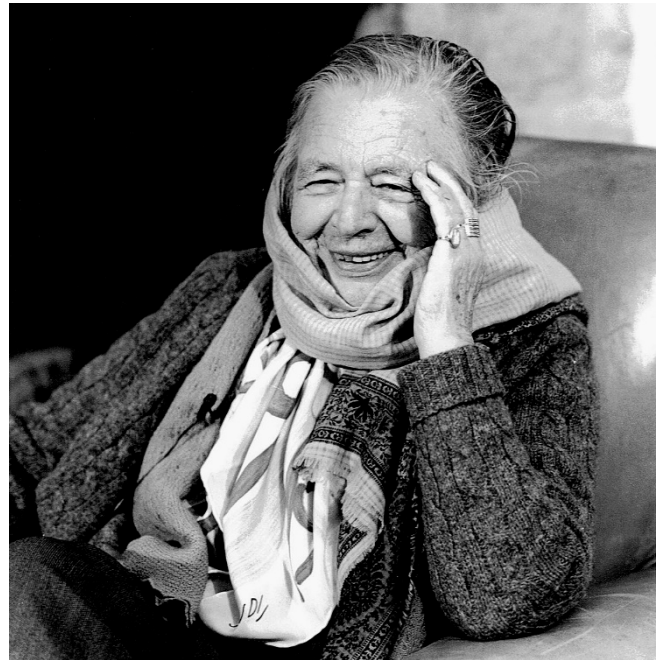


Poem for a Doll bought in a Russian Bazaar

I'm
true
royal blue
black as grime.

I'm the mighty Maroon
(I challenge Petrushka).
I've night for my troika,
the sun for my golden balloon.



If darkness is big, I'm almost bigger,
but have any living being's weakness:
the lightest puff disturbs my boneless figure.

I'm primed with knowledge, hence my meekness:
Don't laugh at my sooty-faced grin: you might forget:
I'm held in a giant's hands, like you, just a marionette.

Marguerite Yourcenar (1903-87)