



Jesse Minckert

Status Activate

Mother wishes us to bind her sable-painted eyelids
closer to the skin. Her stomach contents:
smothered in pillows, remarks on handprints
and sediments, burn red from the resistance
where the elbow fuses to the wrist.

Our desiccated faces turn away.
Her calamity, a calcified formation,
lies atremble in the vestibule.

But we shall not forget the wheelbarrow shuffle,
like mustard seeds in urine; a rising estuary
closes on our mouths, parentheses of hours

and minutes collapsible as faith.

Yearning for Penelope

We exercise the prerogative of our years
to snicker behind our fingers at the children

as if their perfection were a channel
through which all pass unwitting.

Sirens in reverse: we see no coast.
The wind transports us here and there,

our ears already full of wax. Notice how
our trumpets fade along the perimeter.

Jesse Minckert has written plays of theater and radio, short stories, novels and poems. His book of “microstories,” *Shortness of Breath and Other Symptoms*, appeared in 2008. His poetry has appeared in *Limestone*, *Aunt Chloe*, *Wandering Hermit Review* and elsewhere.

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