



Image from DIY Woodworking

Jesse Minkert

Protector

This Deborah said in a whisper
to her friend is my smear
my smudge on the skins
of dinosaurs.

A stone from above
set fire to the air.
My cream my thin shield
too many years too late.

This Deborah said is my dressing
too narrow too far away
to stop the rise of the rats
and all that then derive.

That next misunderstanding
the source of survival
grew larger in the sea
than any other beast

died by the hands
of floating marsupials
for the sake of a commodity
rendered from their oils.

If time were a road she said
If I could drive in the other lane
could launch a projectile
at the mass descending

at inconceivable speed
and strike it at an angle
send it elsewhere
perhaps into the sun.

Let the dinosaurs pursue
another road than this that led to me
get the chance to arrive intact
at their intended destination.

Would they fly?
Would they drink nectar from blossoms?
Would they open puzzle boxes
with their beaks?

Would they carve mountains
into monuments
build cities industries empires
fire projectiles into the void?

Would they scribble messages
on strips of bark?
Would they question?
Would they sing?

Jesse Minkert's work has appeared in some fifty journals. He has published two books: a collection of microstories, *Shortness of Breath & Other Symptoms* (Wood Works Press), and *Rookland* (Finishing Line Press).