

## At the Nursing Home

—inside an old man vacant by the window

Hold me occasionally for the light is fading  
and I can no longer see the hills that once  
rose there, brown hills, sand, sand. I see  
the colour, like the brown shoulders of a girl  
I knew by the lake, outside the window.  
Did I marry her? Were there children?  
Is that snow? Is it winter already again?

I remember her shoulders, not her face  
or name. I remember your face sometimes  
(are they your shoulders?) and your touch.  
Hold me occasionally. The hills are gone,  
and monotony. I know that word, but I  
could not say it and no longer even try.  
A strange world, monopoly. It tastes like bleach.

My life is there in a thimble on the night stand  
only I can see. I stare at it for hours. Hold me  
occasionally. There is no hurry. The light fades  
slowly. It seems the last part of some other day,  
and the thimble holds so little. The hills are gone  
and soon the thimble will tip slowly over.  
It will make no sound, nothing will spill.

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### WINNING ENTRY



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