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No Signal

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No Signal

The police weren't courteous enough to shut off the TV,
leaving the girl on the bed, a stiff, foamy screen,
hued blue and with shadows adding weight
to the blood ponds below her half-moon eyes.

A relative adjusts her place,
illuminating, darkening, and illuminating again
the girl's face. For the younger sister
at the corner of the bed, it is a chthonic
drive-in movie projected on familiar flesh.

The mother wraps and unwraps her warm fingers
through the girl's hair as if she were Penelope,
but nothing can be undone and the girl has become
too far lost from home. For the Gods and the Winds
abandoned their blessing
as the arrow missed Achilles' heel
and lodged in the girl's arm.

She keeps weaving.

Brushing a wrist against the
hardened arm of the girl

incites the sister to keel back
from the realities of mortality.

Sister leaving sister. Sister leaving sister.

The still animated daughter slams the door
causing a quake.

Though the war has ended, the trip commences
leaving the lifeless—less of a hero
and more of a handmaid.

Andrea Walker