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My sister was sick once over Christmas vacation while I was staying with her. Her tub was backed up and every time someone showered, the water never drained, and had to be drained by hand using a large bowl, feeding it into the bathroom sink. She asked if I could drain the tub so she might open up her capillaries with a shower. I obliged and dug each scoop of the bowl as low as it could go, hefting up the marbly water, again and again and again. The skin—dead, pale, sloughed-off sin – swam in bits in that cold burial of a baptism. It festered within, then, the sickness, growing from her to me, travelling casually like an old friend. It possessed my body by morning, snapping every tendon, sapping every muscle, turning my constitution to slush. It was harsh ablution. I felt my insides rust. I was Paul-stricken to my bed, dependent on the care of others. Death toyed with my head. Everything turned brown and offended. The sickness flipped and kicked and danced inside me. Hours, hours, hours in that pain, reeling without rest but for a moment's mind-darkness. I became bodily bedmates with my sister's sickness, until it finally flung itself from my bowels out through the tunnels of my mouth and into a waiting pail. I found my body was mine then, and got up, and I saw myself in a mirror, a ghost in both my eyes, staring out from the darkness.

JANUARY 12TH, 2015

Jared Sebastian

NEW STUYAHOK

Donielle Hart O.

"Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus,
'Teacher, rebuke your disciples!'
'I tell you,' he replied, 'if they keep quiet,
the stones will cry out.'"

Luke 19:39-40

past the gully, now – imagining a forevergaze, looking on and on and on and
on to covering of tall, breathing grass, now – Nushagak far below, mountains
I cannot reach

stones crying up through my feet – grab branches, make sure we're alone,
kiss them, sink my teeth in, taste them
walking through the tunnel of alders into the
light.
Oh, God –
how mysterious You are

excuses made for carrying red rocks in my pockets – fellow
worshippers. it's not enough to squeeze them, rub them.
[dear hardGodlove,
come and clean me]
I want to, want to, want to
go past the gully, now,
where I find them

find me