Kelley Jean White **Jarred** 

'the death, then, of a beautiful woman, is unquestionably, the most poetic topic in the world' — Edgar Allan Poe

(or a child)

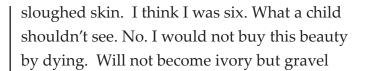
A hell of a way to lose weight, but I envied you your handsome husband, your antique ivory lace, your antique ivory skin; I cannot believe that the specimens they showed us at the lecture last night exist, a waxed baby with blue glass eyes,

a chubby baby arm, hand gracefully dangling an eye in a bell jar; the professor said the anatomist's daughter embroidered the lace after her father dyed and injected the tissues—too crisp too white to be six hundred years old, six hundred years,

immortal except to fire or neglect, or, mercury spun through veins, or to lay one's body open streaked red and violet blue, to be a skull pulled from the mouth of the Ganges, to be one side of a buried jaw, to be the horse's pelvis

stamping in our cellar pulled by reins of great leather sinew. Reigns, like the bones of a king in armor, like the hanged man preserved with his rope, like the brow of a man cased with the spear that drove through it. Damn us—

the taxidermied infant, formaldehyde (and I am back to those fetal twin deer, swimming in their own



and sand. Let insects and mice dance wherever you lay me. Swallow my salt. Let ice have the rest.

### I don't remember what he was selling

but your father traveled both sides of the Connecticut River, Vermont, and over to New York and he had to make small talk in all the little towns, 1930's, '40's, 50's; you're born, I'm born, 60, your brother—

you hated the Red Socks all your life (by then he'd settled in Queens,) you hated them because of Harvard, your brother hated the townies when the cousins gathered in Revere—your dad stayed loyal, even

in sight of Yankee Stadium, and now when he's dying, you brothers want to give him the win—in the playoffs your brother says, win, yes, but how many games, and I have to laugh

at you on the phone, remembering how we got off class to watch the playoffs in the junior high cafeteria and how despair settled like sulfur in a lunar eclipse, and if there was a series—you know the stats; I wonder how

many extra days your dad's been given—1918, he's 86 this year; you're a good son, you haven't forgotten who taught you how to pitch, still know how to sell hope with a fatal diagnosis.

# He painted me with my hair pulled back

tautly from my tired and too old already face, interns, the two of us, white-coated; he is crisp and well defined, the stone walls of the castle -our apartment building-painted in tough and gray-brown the background on my side a wash of white so much we never finished