

NICOLAS HUNDLEY

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*The Blood You Let*

The blood you let coagulated into amber. You enlisted leeches, siphon, syringe—but still felt weak, foolish, transparent, bureaucratic, and, in the end, remained the infanta. You sought mirrors, gained mirrors, took on mirrors and the endless corridors they elicited. Thinking it might give window into your infirmity, we propped you opposite of mirrors. You grew impatient, mutilated them. You wore magnets, arranged them about your person. You called for absolution, and, absolved, resolved to die outside the church. Your eyes toggled, flickered, failed to lock onto anything. You took on spots, grew spotted, suffered bumps, a Braille networking your flesh. We took to stones, warmed the stones, configured them on your person. We solicited healers, who opened you up, peered around, and for this we paid them. They smeared you in balm, nearly embalmed you. They siphoned out your breath, replaced it with an air brewed from ash and tar. They sent for tubes, for a length of tubing, and at this I had to intervene.