

Embalmer's Smile

1

The sky is white as salt

**the night bandaged like a civil war
veteran with a crutch and one leg**

**a deranged wind and agony of annoying
demons and fucking angels people the air**

2

**The ocean tries to drag you into
familial conflict as waves calf, tear,
and break with percussive orchestration**

**a small cargo of light drifts
under the whole moon and blackening
paper clouds and roosting crows**

3

Father

**Punching walls, finger wrestling,
blewing snot with his hand
shadow boxing in the mirror
crying at the table while I play
air violin**

4

Mother

**I put a chicken's eye in my mother's
underwear, as I watched her rolling
up her nylons and fastening them with
a garter belt. It was my job to loop the bra
and pop her neck straddling a chair above her**

Funeral Home

**Asleep in her own skin
the pasty make-up
the color of vermouth
blanched hands tied with
with the black beads of the rosary**

**lipstick half smile of the after life
candlelight throws shadows that
makes statues perform miracles**

**living will not be
as rough the second time
says a postcard from the underworld**