

Hand

In the powder-blue
snowflaked
Heritage
Nursing Home lounge

all the wheelchairs are watching
URBAN
LEGENDS:
PART TWO...

a holiday
slasher flick
that even
half-pajamaed

sleigh-ridden
old St. Nick
is forced to watch—

surrounded
by a sparkly
court
of stuffed elves
and spastic reindeer...

until soon enough
blood
is sloshing everywhere

and a severed hand
all by itself
 crawls up
into my mother's lap.

Finely veined
 unwrinkled
and so far at least
 barely
the slightest bit blue

it wants
 nonetheless
just to lie down now
and take a little nap...

But my mother
 of course
wants it to play—

and so
 she slaps it hard
hard
 against her cheek

her heart
 the stupid arm
of her chair
 until finally

by suppertime

it's dead
for sure
 and every bit
as cold
 as zombie meatloaf—

and thus
 summarily buried
with some mashed potatoes
underneath her afghan.

Who needs it?
 But little
little does she know

that tomorrow—
 New Year's
Day in fact
 her vaguely
husband-looking
 dim-wit son—

professor bullshit
 baseball hat—
a scant
 elevator ride
 too late—

will find it
 resting lightly
lightly on her throat
 still warm

in his too late hands—

small fingers those long
 still barely blue.

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