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This Living Hand

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Dean Young

THIS LIVING HAND

It's not only the word roses
lurking inside neurosis or the fact
that most of my formal education
occured in the midwest, so too
my summer job inhaling industrial
reactants should be considered.
It's an unstable world, Babe.
Always an inner avalanche
as they say in receiving.
I'm sure if I'd gotten a shot
of Karl instead of Zeppo Marx
in utereo, things would have turned out
differently. Instead, my mother
went right on eating lobster.
But where were we? Weren't you
over there struggling with your territory?
How did that go? Do you feel your co-workers
were supportive? Did anyone lay hands
upon you? Dreams are down the hall.
If you were shot into outer space
and came back in a 100 years, unaged,
what would you find? What can you do
personally to insure that never happens?
Will you have my baby? It's amazing
anything ever gets done around here.
Everyone thinks even changing vase water
is in someone else's purview as if
this is a place where rivers flow backwards
and children balance eggs on end
demonstrating forces at work, ordinary
forces come to deranged circumstances.
I'm not exactly one of those ruined folk

with a narrative tied round me neck but
I have obviously seen too many movies
in which people transform into wolves,
reptiles, metal reptiles, poisonous clouds,
vegetarians, bunny-boilers, organs
of the other side, strippers stripping
to fund the needs of a special child,
to be of use regarding: work load,
love forlornness, travel arrangements
(don't go but if you do, don't come back),
moose behavior (I have heard however
they should not be approached),
chandelier installation that does or
does not require re-wiring. Ditto
check-book balancing, rifle-repair
of current manufacture or flint-lock,
all forms of testifying, arbitration
and/or surgery although in an emergency,
say if a bee flew into your mouth,
stinging your throat thereby swelling
closed your windpipe, I could perhaps
be availed upon to attempt a tracheotomy
with this very pen
with which I write these words.