

The Brothers

Margaret Starnely

Blood and the promise of blood run in that family.
It boils in the fire of their breath, and lies
hot under their muscles, and threatens through their
kisses,
as an undercurrent of voices in a quiet night.

If you touch them, you will feel it,
and instinctively draw back, not knowing why. Their
eyes
strip you garment by garment, sneering. Their lips
write with hard laughter, as their pupils tangle
among the silver buttons below your nipples.

Or they will walk in upon your genteel slumber,
intrude their dauntlessness, and leave you numb
with the shadowy sorrow that follows love, and you hear
them walk away noisily,
snorting and chuckling in the barrels of their bellies.

