

Wreath for My Father

By Mistee St. Clair

And now I shave my father again
for the second time, the last before he dies.
The recliner swallows what's left
of one hundred and eighteen pounds.
It will take all afternoon to get his wasted body
back to the hospice bed. I use his old
electric razor, which is quick but not
as close as a blade. I barely have time
to observe the scar under his left eye,
which has disappeared into wrinkles
and a sunken eye socket. To love him
is to love an infant you don't know
will grow up and give you hell. I've never asked
about the scar. I'll touch it when he's gone.

Mistee St. Clair is the author of the chapbook *This Morning is Different*, an Alaska Literary Award grantee, and has poems forthcoming in or has been published by *The Common*, *Northwest Review*, *SWWIM Every Day*, and more. She lives with her family and border collie in Juneau, Alaska, a northern rainforest, where she is a 49 Writers board member and an editor for the Alaska State Legislature.

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