

Howard Nelson

POEM IN OIL

I pour a little pool of mineral oil
into my palm
and spread it across your belly.
I pour a little more
and place my palm between your breasts
and rub a slow, slippery figure-8 around them,
around their big, pink nipples
where faint blue veins run
at the subtle borders.
I run my hand across your forehead
and down your temples
and across your neck
and the rounded beams of collarbones.
Another pool of oil
I rub into your shoulders
and down your arms
and another for your hands,
applied by weaving and unweaving our fingers.
I make your feet and shins and thighs shine.
Anointing you with oil, I am anointed
by the goodness and mercy of your body.
I slide my fingers into the triangle of hair
that already glistens
and knead the softness underneath.
I pour a little pool of oil
into my palm
and spread it, for good measure,
in circles
on your round and swelling belly.