

Miss Polly Is Akimbo Underneath the Mother Emanuel Collection Table

The one who came to start the next Civil War speaks to her directly. "Have I shot you yet?" There is no one else left to answer. In the church basement all are dead or bleeding out. Miss Polly, half on her knees, is askew, tilted, her last angle,

akimbo to the eight others who are sprawled and already spiraling toward heaven. In her mind she too is about to die. There is no place to hide when you are the last one facing the waving gun. The air has been invaded by a poison mix of bright red ore

spewing from his mouth. There was a spilling. There is about to be another. He cannot see the seeping septic colors but she can and there is no isthmus wide enough, beneath her shield of a table, to keep her from the current of his non-stop debris.

A floating band of iron orange tincture crooks her pounding heart but does not push her downstream. She waits sideways, as high up as she can, refusing to look at him. She knows how evil can enter through the iris if beheld too long. She will not be all black

and blue unsure of what has been released in the room. A river of flaming copper is moving slowly through her blood. She is an honest woman and has seen with her own two honest woman eyes, what hate erupting inside a man can do and what

this one has done. She decides her last words on this earth will not be camouflaged and khaki, handed over just before he runs out the same way he walked in. When he shot the Pastor first she could have faked it, fallen over sideways, held her

self perfectly still, asked her body to lie for her but that would not have been the life she has lived. It will not be the death she dies at his feet. She turns into the last one standing and her molten answer arrives, the color of pounded beets, beaten out of

their safe skins, her persimmon words outline every beloved bullet riddled body still lying on the floor. "No, you have not."

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