

Third family portrait

Radical Face

It was the dead of winter
The cold was in our bones
And our shelves stood barren
As we had ever known

So our mother stands on the porch one evening
The silent crack in her stony mask
she looked up at the sky, and said "please"

And by the turn of summer we packed up all we owned
And with my mom and brothers we started for the coast
And I would count all the clouds on the way
And you and I would name them while the world around us changed
And I remember asking if the place we're moving would have more
food
And my mother grew as distant as can be
and mouthed, "please"

So I, so tired eyes, pay no mind
The river of time will drown these days out

It was the year just after we stood and watched the sea
And my mom was smiling
No longer saying please