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Jack

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SARAH ELISABETH FREEMAN

Jack

A lack of shortening in the house. A sprung limb. There is no name for this I've had enough. Each brick a hundred times a brick.

Once they had a game for me. I was thin and I could jump. I wished away from this. The wick was hot, though I avoided it. There was a spot of envy in me for those who watched. They were composed, their clothes were crisp...

I was an entertaining thing, I was a prop. They paid and they were cordial but begot in me a need for change.

One day I stopped mid-game and climbed the pole that cropped up from the stadium. At first they were confused. Then they cheered me on. As fine a way I knew to remove myself. I went on. Into supper-time. Still not to the top.

I cannot explain what happened then for either I've forgot, though I cannot imagine this, or I fell asleep, wearied from the thin air up above—

I don't know how I came to be caught. The bars are gold, a comfortable cot, but when I'm moved it's as though a typhoon has picked up. I can never see the whole of my captor: the bloody hell of it. My views are cropped portions of enormous hands and wrists. Fingers. An eye, a lip. I've no notion whose curiosity, whose hate I've got. Yes, I've had enough of this—but

mine is not to wonder why (*for what I ought?*)—this is time to think on purposes and mine I think was not enough—now, perhaps I'm being fattened up—

not a thing can be done about it. I'm waiting to be finished with or lost.