

SALLY ROSEN KINDRED

Sleeping Beauty Says Goodnight to Little Red

I won't sing you to sleep, don't ask me.
I know—torn hood, wet bread, your upturned basket
of stars—how hard it's been: nights

in the wolf's blood woods, and before,
in the oven of your mother's womb.
I was a girl, too, before I went to bed.

I woke to this—motherless: bare head, tight dress—
a prince who could buy my life back with a kiss—
but when it starts to get dark in my fingers, I remember.

Nights now, I fall into some closed oak door
that's not there. I'm unwelcome in dreams.
Some nights I have the prince for sleep

and that's like a door, but stranger. Here,
child, lie down. No songs.
A lullaby is a broken cup waiting to slice your lip.

Close your eyes, hope for a hundred years.
Your hands are cold: I'll hold them. Now go
from me: I'm unwelcome in dreams,

even yours. Sleep will cover the trees, their teeth
and eyes—sleep will leaf over the throat of blood
that dreams you back down. Sleep will come

and cover what we've lost: the bodies
of girls bending like trees in a dark wood.
Let's not speak of it. Let's not sing.



ABOUT SALLY ROSEN KINDRED

Sally Rosen Kindred's first full-length poetry collection is *No Eden* (Mayapple Press, 2011). Her poems have appeared in *Quarterly West*, *Hunger Mountain*, *Linebreak*, and other journals, and her chapbook, *Darling Hands*, *Darling Tongue*, is forthcoming from Hyacinth Girl Press in 2013.

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