



1995

Children in Winter

Kristen Tracy

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Recommended Citation

Tracy, Kristen (1995) "Children in Winter," *Inscape*: Vol. 15 : No. 2 , Article 6.
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/inscape/vol15/iss2/6>

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CHILDREN IN WINTER
KRISTEN TRACY

There are women living
a much longer life
in this winter.
I stand it
with its cold side
almost breaking into me.

I lie here
in night
and let myself
think of them—
some of them make it
back to me.
They hold my shoulders
press near my neck
and with their almost hands
untangle the hair
across my throat.

While they are here
they want to tell me everything—
of how I am a woman
of how the beds are growing
past their time.

I pretend they can still live
forever outside of me
in those trembling patterns
that loosen my skin.

When they are sure
they have stretched
too far barefoot
into this winter
they cry.

On any other night
I would have let out
a small cry for all of them.
Tonight, I arch my body
into their sides
and tell them
that the wonderful world
is still gone
but we can have everything
later than they think.