

The Youngest Daughter's Tale

Lewis Horne

Three of them are older. None
Grew bold enough in tone and manner
To carry her executive airs.

Caesarean-born after long labor,
She's taller now than any other.
She is she, she says. No other.

Her sheaf has bowed to theirs.
Her moon has richened in their glow.
Now hastening, she lifts her chin,

Gathers her own vocabulary,
Belts and buckles up the luggage
Ticketed with risk. We watch.

We are the scapegoats of her worry,
Driven into the atmosphere
Of our ill-rationed fret. We're

Accomplished in a fuselage
Jitter-boosted into orbit
About the center of her calm,

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Glimmering so fragilely,
A sixteen-year-old calm — with storm —
Round which with migraine piloting

We circle, deployed into voices,
Voices spread with pensioned caution
To slide among the shrug of stars.