

2018

A Laying on of Hands

Melissa Crowe

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.library.uab.edu/nelle>

Recommended Citation

Crowe, Melissa (2018) "A Laying on of Hands," *Nelle*: Vol. 1, Article 11.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.library.uab.edu/nelle/vol1/iss2018/11>

This content has been accepted for inclusion by an authorized administrator of the UAB Digital Commons, and is provided as a free open access item. All inquiries regarding this item or the UAB Digital Commons should be directed to the [UAB Libraries Office of Scholarly Communication](#).

Melissa Crowe

A LAYING ON OF HANDS

The moon rose ringed one night
that winter, its areola of soft light
like an omen. Sister and brother,
babies, slept, and my mother too sick

to give a damn about the moon
lay on the couch, her tail of rubber
tubed into a plastic sack of urine
on the floor. Outside I stood

with the man who had become
my father, the driveway an ice slick
pocked with salt. He said he wondered
if such a moon was beautiful.

Shuddering with love
and shame, I'd held a boy
inside myself the night before
and thought the same—

was it sweet or terrible,
that first sex, while downstairs
my mother scratched her burns
and called for me to fill her cup

with ice. Like some saint shedding
fingers or breasts, she grew large
as she diminished, and in the ring
around the moon I saw our lives,

each of us a separate shard
refracting her disease.
My dad and I stared hard
at the sky, and from the corner

of my eye I saw his head, bare
and fogged with breath, somehow
prayerful though upturned
instead of bowed. I wonder now

if we wished the same,
my mother well but also the right
for us to feel good, even if
she never would again.