

Mary Ardery

*The Ladies Here Have
Topographic Hands*



Blue mountain ranges bulge in thin lines,
red valleys and brown hills dot the plains.
The gold was mined out of this region long ago.

They peel apart their sandwiches, suspicious
of ham and cheese—can't remember what they enjoy.
They have memories but no memory.

No husbands, but they wear diamond rings.
The polish on one woman's nails smells fresh
and looks smooth—uncharted territory for now.

They have mapped out her patterns of comfort.
Next week, when she asks to try a new color,
they will use the pale pink they already know she loves.

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