

Black Handkerchief

Robert A. Rees

Lying on the table,
he was as handsome
as the day he had taken her
through the veil.

Now his body was inert,
his anger veiled even in death.

She looked at his nakedness
one last time before the high priests
dressed the body.

After the garments, robe, and
sash, after the bright-leaved apron
and the stiff white cap,
she asked the bishop

for a few minutes alone with the man
she had been sealed to for time
and all eternity. She did not

kiss him as she intended,
but looked one last time
at his rigid face, then, slipping
the black lace handkerchief from her sleeve,
she placed it over his face and quietly
closed the casket.