

## Thomas, Not Saying

Jesus said to his disciples, "Compare me to something and Tell me what I am like." ...  
Thomas said to him, "Teacher, my mouth is utterly unable to say what you are like."  
- Gospel of Thomas 13.

The finger must have seen something.  
Say. The skeptical finger  
sees more than the eye of faith.  
Nothing invasive or military. The hole  
invites the finger. So. A probationary  
touch, tentative in intention then electric  
in performance. Say. Only Caravaggio  
not Thomas, sees, through Thomas'  
finger, red corpuscles flushing the white  
capillary walls. An angioblast  
performed by Caravaggio by means  
of the finger of Thomas. Not so.  
There is incredulity to reckon with.  
Six eyes and one finger focus intently  
on the thoracic fault that rhymes  
with the folds of the man's robes  
(robes once folded straight and flat  
and put away).

The man with the finger looks  
away – to enhance, say, the finger's encounter.  
He seems intent on listening, though,  
for a word the others have no need of.  
Two of the three fix a clinical gaze  
on the folly of flesh, so, as if  
professing faith yet awaiting the full report.  
The pierced one keeps gentle hold  
of the wrist of the guided finger,  
letting it draw, say, its own conclusions  
(the Now of the whole matter);  
and it is this touch, not the Braille wound  
his finger cannot read, but the hand  
on his wrist that tells, that knits breath back  
to bone and says it is so and so and not so.

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