Virginia Aste

by Peter Erich

I'd like to lift the oils from the surface on your tea and share it on our foreheads. To pick it up (slowly or slower than that) would be to drop my thumb into it like a stone. This is a quiet thing we did in the library.

There is a new painting in the entryway but it feels like it has been there before. You pick a bit of paint from the canvas and look away as if you were going to barf. You whisper, *This is like getting a hand full of black slugs as a gift.*

The hat box is organized by the overly drunk public librarian who has forgotten my name. She has grabbed me by the collar and is holding me next to the tin water fountain. *I am Richard. I'mmuh uh Richard. I'm looking for the lost and found and s*he comes at me like tire swing whipping through the trees and
says, *Shhhhhhhhhhysters!*

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