

holding him

• *Deborah Schnitzer* •

they stood by the side of the transport holding hands

their father told them
"stay together
hold onto each other;
whatever happens
do not let go!"

when the girl knew she'd forgotten
she picked up her younger brother's hand.
they stood
her cloak frayed at the hood
his face turned down
like a bed at night
if someone was looking for them
it was death

in the mud that circled their ankles
and the wind that unwrapped them
nobody lifted a finger

the gravel spit by the transport stoned them
and the rain bruised them
when they fell down she lay like a glove

holding him