

well

• *Deborah Schnitzer* •

Joseph has taken in his brothers
he can read their broken finger nail talk in his sleep
but he cannot get to Pharaoh.

the dream's grain chafes
against the ribbed oesophagus of their hiding place
the saucers of his brothers' dried bellies

broken finger nail talk
shaves the well's dry wall

even notepaper is thicker, lasts longer
than children scrawled from the blocks in the ghetto

there is nothing to eat