

AND THE RABBITS JUMPED FREE

so, she never let me
mudpies, red rover, hopscotch
 protection or neglect, dereliction
 or love, i was burdened
with, a childhood disappeared
missed

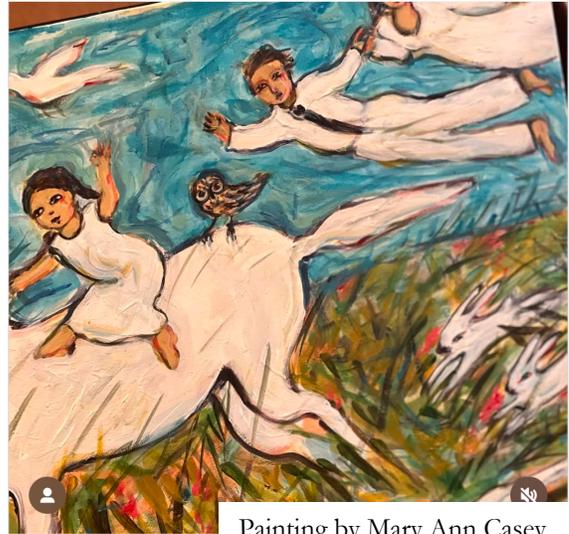
the other children were allowed
to play, to frolic, to be carefree
 yes, that is what it was,
she never let me be free
of care, i had to care for her
always

i watched them chase while
i was alone behind a door, locked
 what would have happened
 if i disappeared, she knew that
she would have no one, alone
forever

the others learned the greens, yellows
browns, and blues
 i am colorblind, too confined
not understanding the concept of color,
the ways of outside unknown
endlessly

being your parent's parent
was hard at age ten
 having to cook family meals
 before learning fractions, taking
care of others, not reciprocated
ever

i often wonder about what they gleaned
in the dirt, smelling sweet grasses and tasting breezes
 while I never discovered hope,
 forgiveness or joy, inhabiting
claustrophobic containers, still stuck
lost



Painting by Mary Ann Casey