Marquette University e-Publications@Marquette

English Faculty Research and Publications

English, Department of

1-1-1994

Gold Rush

Angela Sorby

Marquette University, angela.sorby@marquette.edu

Published version. *Brooklyn Review*, Vol. 11 (1994): 17. Publisher link. © 1994 City University of New York, Brooklyn College, Department of English.

Gold Rush

You find the Petrified Man lodged under glass at the back of Ye Olde Curiosity Shoppe, a tourist trap on Puget Sound. He is skinny, a cross between Christ and a bat. He's kept his moustache trim since the end of his personal gold rush era catastrophe. Tar pit, you figure, or mummification in long johns. No relatives bore him back to a churchyard in Boston or Sweden. His rib cage is sunken but immaculate the way a mud flat looks clean at dawn before the first clam diggers. His shell toughens, exempt from the preacher, foreclosure, locusts, a boyish lover with transparent wrists, whatever drove him North of the Northwest to muck for Alaskan gold. A sign on the case reads DO NOT TOUCH but you already feel weather conditions in his country, so nearby that your spine

matches the shoreline node for node, but so far away that ferries float there under different stars, a big dipper full of what? Not light, not water, not spit, not blood.