**Wish We Were Octopi**

by Stella Miles

Visiting friends and family

face to face –

really, really embrace

not lightly, but tightly –

long, strong hugs

after three long Covid years.

The ineffable feeling of feeling again.

No capricious caresses,

only heartfelt handling.

We hold and enfold,

heal the atrophy

left by lack of touch.

Filled with hope,

we gently grope

familiar bodies.

Reach around,

arms surround.

Wish we were octopi.

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