

## Ode to My Gramma

by Raven Yoder

Gramma, it is you who is my mother.  
Not born of your body, you held me like I was  
Your blessing. Your grace steeped with age,  
Silverskin brewed to strength, so much that I rename  
You: magic.  
Patience: Summer, hunger loomed. “Soon. Food’s soon,” you crooned. Forward. Choose food.  
Compassion: Invitations shared, but, birthday bare, you fashion a passionate distraction.  
Encouragement: “You’re a wordsmith!” You insist. Your crystal ball exists to give me lists of  
Declaration: “You’ll change the world someday,” you say.  
If I do, it’s an inherited trait as you have changed my world too.

Gramma, it is you who is my playmate.  
Games of cadences from the age when I was craving sentences  
And words that rhyme like ‘ashore’ and ‘implore’—  
I implored you for more. And, as before, you always gave more.  
You: magic when a cardboard box stood in for a friend,  
Windows etched, we made a submarine and sailed from here to Pluto and  
In between.  
Summer’s sweaty sunshine sought us, so you brought the sprinkler out.  
My hair, glinting golden in the light, warmed yours of weary grey—  
Or painted it more grey; it depended on the day. Oh, but your love didn’t.

Gramma, it is you who is my teacher.  
As your bones groan and step saunters, I guide you.  
Carry me, you vied to. Lean on me, you’re entitled to.  
As your skin shivers and joints stiffen, I make your bed.  
Tuck me in, you tried to. I squirmed, you’re still. Time rearranges roles it’s tied to.  
You: magic for you’ve made what disappears from  
You reappear in me.  
I, your spine when tides arise, shine light for you as you  
Have given so much  
That I may receive. Thank you.

Gramma, it is you who is my inspiration.  
Your childhood that was a mouthful of metal  
Cradled a blessing. Because you came from it.  
And you are so much more than you think you are:  
You: magic.  
Shivering shyness shares itself and you shift your shortcomings aside: share light.  
Raps adversity, tatty in its rags—acid and you add: it grasps path  
To run past you. Need creeps in, breeds dreary eves and you breathe: flee greed.  
Loneliness wallows, choking hope to its hollow. Yet, you swallow.  
For you know what follows: me. And I am here for each of your tomorrows.

