

Hands

Working at the diner waiting on a woman
who kept her dentures in her brazier.
A woman who worked once but retired
today. She slaps my hand as she tells a joke
I don't get, but I smile. Working hard
for that two dollar tip- for the escape
from my mother's home made from
aluminum and her drunk who's been
out of work for as long as I've known
him. He's retired now. This
is what my mother tells her clients
who are nosy old ladies
at the hair salon. They hold her
hand and purse their wrinkly face
together, women giving their two cents
as they get their shampoo sets. The scent
of cherry shampoo reminds me
why I grind at the diner trying to get a degree.
Working with my hands standing up so I can
eventually work with my hands
sitting down. Saving for retirement
since my mother spent hers to support us.
She's too broke to buy dentures. Gaps.