

GRANDMOTHER

Were you cold?

I was cold and the wind was bitter
The canyon wide and deep and chill,
The cabin walls as thin as paper.
Hold my hand.
Yes, I will.

Were you sad?

Bent, like a flower
Blown in the salt marsh by a gale,
Bathed by the moon and the ice of a shower.
Warm my hand.
Yes, I will.

Were you ill?

Yes, ill and lonely,
Lying on the blackened floor,
The children crying "Mother, mother!
Give us water. Give us more!"

Did you help them?

Yes, I gave them
The dregs of water from the well.
On my knees I crawled to bathe them,
Touch their lips with the empty pail.

Were you thirsty?

Yes, I thirsted
But not for water, milk, or food;
I thirsted for my God's pure mercy.

Did he save you?

As he could.

Are you cold?

Yes, cold and lonely,
Walking toward the blowing night.
Have your warm hands come to take me?
Yes, that is right.