

Grandma Comes for Me

Emma Lou Thayne

Out of Sunday morning dark
My grandma came for me.

Stripped bare to dreaming I saw
Her occupy the fat black leather rocker

Where my uncle lifted her from bed
And Mother helped her dress to be,

The last time up before the liver cancer took her.
Her velvet dress, long, blue on blue.

And amber beads I knew, but
Her hand that reached for mine, a 12-year-old's,

Lay identical to mine at 72, tawny,
Veined, with fingers straight, bones obvious

On the cushioned leather arms. I slid
My smaller hand to where she covered it

With hers and pressed anointing into me
Flooding as her smile between the hollow cheeks,

The deep brown claiming eyes still holding me
These sixty years beyond another touch.

To church I wore my blue on blue ten years hung away
And with her amber beads long curled untouched

In that dark drawer, the grandma that I am
Became a lighted shell housing like the wind in trees

The limber spirit of a girl
Touched holy by a holy knowing how.