

Grandma Keeps Forgetting

Grandma keeps forgetting that my grandpa died.
She asks us where he is, why he's been gone
so long. And if we say, Remember?

He had a heart attack, she tries to remember
but she can't. We have to tell her that he died.
That makes her mad. So now we say he's gone

to someplace nice. She's glad he hasn't gone
to war again. It wasn't always like this. I remember
once when I was little, we found a bird that died.

What's 'died'? I asked, and Grandma said, the bird is gone, but we remember.

—*Helen Frost*

Christmas Tritina for Marshall

I open my eyes to the dark
of 4:30 a.m. I slip into your room to shake you awake,
but you're already sitting up, silent, waiting.

Wordlessly I join you in the seasonal waiting,
jumping into the dark
lump that is your bed. We pray for Mom and Dad to awake.

Finally they are out of bed, though only half awake.
You and I scamper to the top of the stairs, waiting,
yet again, for Dad and his camera. We can't peek downstairs: it's too dark.

I will remember, forever, waiting in the dark for the others to awake and
whispering my dreams to you.

—*Bailey Irving, grade 7*

Early Evening Tritina

The sun was low in the sky. We were going to watch for deer.
It would be dark soon.
We had only a little time, but I was with you.

I climbed the ladder of your tree stand and glanced down at the pond. You followed and said, “We might not see a deer.”
I nodded. “But if we’re going to, it will be soon.”

Your words were magic. *Soon*
was an understatement. I gazed down at the clover-covered field. So did you.
As if on cue, out of the woods stepped two majestic deer.

They ate and left, too soon. That evening, you gave me a miracle in the shape of
the deer.

—*Ruth Langton, grade 7*

Gardening with Mom

You put on the straw hat
that screens your face from the sun.
You are ready to plant in the rich, spring dirt.

But first: much turning over of dirt.
You adjust the hat
to shield your eyes from the new-burning sun.

The sun
heats my bare head, but I ignore it and join you, hands in the dirt.
I can live without a hat

but not without you: I am content – hatless, dirty, and by your side
under a May sun.

—*Rose Beverly, grade 7*