

Poetry

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My grandmother Lily beckons me over
from the bed where she lies wilted
and asks that I open the window.

The breeze glides in first,
its gentle breath meeting hers.
She tells me she missed this dearly
when last year's summer winds brought wildfire ash.

The birdsong arrives next,
bearing a sweet aftertaste.
She tells me the names of every
mourning dove and quail,
and introduces Gilbert, the hummingbird.

I turn to her as I step back from the sill
and for a moment she is suspended in the light,
her face serene, eyes fixed elsewhere, outward.
A trick of the light, or some other magic, perhaps,
but her eyes drink in the glow of the sunbeam and
above the bed that houses her roots, she is floating.

She beckons me over
and tells me there is no gift more precious
than an open window.

And in that moment, among the breeze and serenade and sunglow,
all I want is to fling open every window in the world.

Acknowledgments. I would like to thank the natural world for the lily of the valley flower. Its name and sweet scent remind me of her today.

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