

# The Breaking of China Plates | Morgan Darian

Grackle *noun*

: a large blackbird of the American family.

: known for: bravery and resourcefulness.

: sighting: things are not as they seem.

Use in a sentence: *The grackle soared high and low,*

*finding no friends on the telephone wire.*

I am ashamed of my grandmothers.

Proud of

grandfathers who broke the law, pirates of time and industry, willing to work towards death – their pictures make it to the mantle, while grandmothers fade forgotten, judged too shrill, too selfish, rude, mental health pushed to the back behind socks and journals worrying about husbands not coming home.

I should be ashamed of my grandfathers, and maybe proud of grandmothers

surviving, alone

raising handfuls of kids on 30 dollars a week,  
kept safe in husbands' pockets.

*I am ashamed of my grandfathers, proud of grandmothers  
breaking white porcelain  
against farmhouse sinks,  
single mothers married to ghosts, married to men lost in  
secretaries and forests,  
young mothers fighting venomous snakes in the long  
grasses of Iowa,  
walking five kids to church down Chicago pavement.  
Pirates of education and self-reliance,  
a baby on one hip, a shotgun on the other when strangers  
roll down dirt roads.  
Gravediggers, buriers of wishes, laying hopes in coffins  
along with The American Dream and what love was  
supposed to be.*

*So manly, this breaking of hearts.*

*So unladylike, this breaking of china.*