

## Grandma Turns 93

On these April mornings  
that only hint of spring,  
with a child's anticipation, she says,  
"Will you roll me to the garden?"  
Removing her shawl,  
"You can go now. I'll be fine."

She will sit for hours  
fumble out of her slippers,  
dig her toes into the ground.  
Her arthritic body  
opening to the sun.  
Just when I think she's fallen asleep,  
she cackles  
as the neighborhood tom attacks a crow.

At dinner,  
we cut her meat, butter her bread.  
She shakes, food drops on her robe.  
We don't have peas anymore.

One night,  
hearing giggling girls,  
I entered her room  
to find her and mom  
sprawled on the floor,  
her unwilling body  
taking them both down.

She will be 93 tomorrow,  
celebrating in the garden,  
blowing seeds off dandelions,  
digging weeds  
with her toes.



## Fade Out

I've seen them in the square,  
on warm summer nights,  
that are at once, mild and animating.  
Soft blue and green tiki lights,  
reflected in the bells of trumpets.

They dance barefoot on concrete.  
When the tempo picks up,  
girls prance around their partners.  
Old men, smoking pipes,  
slump in their folding chairs,  
and remember.

Saxophone takes the lead,  
swaying, saying touch.  
No steps, no variation,  
more foreplay than dance.

I sit in my darkened upstairs room  
and watch for hours.  
Knowing the box step.  
Knowing the cha cha.  
But unable to feel  
the ardor of music.

The sax trembles into delicious tones.  
Music fades.  
A couple, moved, unmoving  
kiss, unashamed.

