

## To Marjorie, from your nurse

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*Jill Forman*

You reach your hand up to me imploringly.  
I kiss it, quick butterfly kisses.  
Your face folds up—in pain? despair?  
And you start to cry.

For some reason, I remember my grandmother.  
She used to give butterfly kisses too,  
With her eyelashes, not her lips, on my cheek.  
It tickled.

I never told her I loved her, because I didn't.  
Though I preferred her house to mine  
Because she let me eat candy and read comic books,  
And she had a TV.

Grandmother died of a stroke while sleeping  
Peacefully, in her own bed and never knowing  
The tubes, machines and needles of this place  
That make your life hell.

So then what's the link I feel so strongly  
Between an old woman many years gone  
And you, pleading with your eyes, begging me  
For—I don't know what?