

# Letter to My Grandmother's Body, Somewhere in a Medical School

## POETRY

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Gold Medal, **American Voices Award**, **Best-in-Grade Award**

the air has warmed here, just enough to confuse me,  
and I think I have driven 12 hours north  
to you. The frogs are talking, out of hibernation  
and into the pond, and the unshorn grass  
cradles them. I am  
eight years old again, my mother's  
too-big prom dress hanging  
on my shoulders as I sip  
from your glass teacups.  
One summer ago, I smoothed the dress from the chest  
of silk clothes in your attic, where it sits now,  
just the same as when  
I was eight years old,  
looking at you  
through the window, your back bent  
and strong over a shovel. My face morphs  
into a medical student miles from here,  
looking at you  
and your bare vertebrae.  
The kitchen smells of apple  
dumplings and cold clean air, and I steal a crabapple  
off of the tree, spitting the sour taste  
out right after. On some star, lightyears away, time  
travels differently and you  
are still alive, not lying cold  
on a table teaching anatomy, and your house  
is blue and it is yours and there is a cracked blue dove's egg  
on the chair under the oak tree and I am laying on the grass next to it. ■