

our hands

my grandma's ring
wide flat and thin
embossed with tiny woven ropes
a silver banded knuckle on her gnarled harpy claw
peeling on the rim of her coffee cup
as she poked and flicked
scratched punchlines into air
conducted invisible orchestras over our heads
her painted nails clicking
on the soft lacquered wood of the table
flashing in the morning sun

people say i have her hands
which begs the question where do hands come from
and how did i end up with hers
it's strange to think of hands
being passed down
through time or inherited upon death
who had these hands been made for
these thin wrists and slender fingers
what were they good at
what was their use

women always ask who does my manicure
older men in bars stroke the backs of them
and ask if i play piano
i disappoint them all
they're just my grandma's hands

will mine grow to be like hers
wrinkled dry and shiny
strong and playful teasing
her hands our hands are they pleased
of the work i am doing

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