

## Same Habits, New Practitioner

I hate my mother's mother      and I fear I'll become her

She sits alone    on a scratched up, time torn couch    head stuck in the drone of    rotating screens  
without the warmth    of the children she shoved out    and away    to hold her  
and I watch her    in fear of expulsion    and rot    –    the only things    she's got to her name

We are temporary opposites:    she's bitter, withered into herself    I'm still spring green  
ever reaching    toward a snowy peak,    but comparing a noose to a thread is useless;  
I won't comprehend her    until these years are far beyond    my rearview's field

It's difficult living in your twilight days    but word on the dinner table isn't favorable  
to her persona    from eons ago;    and what I know now    is more of the same:    slamming  
cabinets and deliberate silences,    cursing inanimate objects,    bitterness in a five foot frame

We'd all rather turn away    than rest our eyes on her,    lest she spits;    there *is* love for her,    but  
her presence is a disturbance,    unappreciated,    and I think it's radioactive    it makes my mom sick

I wonder: did she try to be good    even when the heat under her ocean    boiled over?  
Was she always selfish,    burying others with a striking aim?    Or did the years of laying beside  
herself    weather her teeth black?

I try to be gentler,    think of her twenties between wars    bouncing a squealing baby on her hip  
while I'm surrounded by    technological crutches,    still scared to call the doctor;    she was absorbed  
in frivolous affairs, too,    and the taste of nicotine used to accompany her  
a s it now does with me    –    still cancerous,    but this time  
the fumes    are pleasant to others

Is this what I am meant to be?    A confection fueled,    spiteful woman,    now laying at the edge  
of time    in a dust bunny body    still holed up in internal pursuits and    begging for a    death  
that's already happened?    Every choice lead her to this abyss    will I dwell down there, too?

I'm sorry,    if it's true,    although I can't look her in the eyes or mouth    long enough to admit it;  
I can only steer away from this path    and hope, if one day    I'm bound to sit on that couch,  
that others will want to linger near me    longer than it takes to ask for the time