

## Glory Be

by Grace Wagner

Mother sat alone on the kitchen floor, pills falling out of their little orange bottle like sand, a soft *tap tapping* marking the time until vespers.

Vespers belonged to her mother, my Grandmother. Grandmother gathers her pocketbook and places a black veil over her hair. Hair like mine could never look as elegant because mine is jungle hair, an uncivilized mass of blood-dark curls struggling to escape. Escape never occurred to me. Me, a bird in an open cage. Cages were what drew me to church.

Church with its shivery old women and its echoes of *Gloria. Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto. Sancto* means holy, my grandmother whispers, as the sign of the cross sits on her lips.

Lips like mine didn't come from my mother, nor from my grandmother. Grandmother said those lips would get Mother in trouble. Trouble blew through Mother's door back in the time before, dark hair and full lips and a voice like a hurricane crashing through her into me. Me with the dark hair. Hair like a hurricane. Hurricane lips.

Lips longing to crash through the doors of the church crying for glory. Glory to the Father. Father, why have you forsaken me? Me with your lips, your hair, your voice.

Voiceless, I drape myself in blue like the virgin, the mother.