

Ekphrastic writing

Peace Liard Regional Show 2021

Peace Liard Regional Arts Council

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Study of Shadows and Wrinkles by Amy Gothard
Poem by Pamela den Ouden



Study of Shadows and Wrinkles
by Amy Gothard

My Mother Taught Me to Whistle

When I was five my mother taught me to whistle
I stood on a chair at her elbow in front of the bathroom mirror
Watching how she pursed her lips
Listening to the sweet chirping escape her mouth
The clear notes singsong-ing to me
I made my mouth an O and over and over
Pressed the air through my lips
My cheeks pulled tight tongue held right
Till my whistle echoed to her
She taught me to whistle through a blade of grass
Held just so between my thumbs all akimbo at first
Then a hard breath to push the sound from the reed
Often she whistled along to songs on the radio
Carrying those old tunes from the '40s and '50s
She knew them all and from her stage in the kitchen
Accompanied the greats—Sinatra, Fitzgerald, Armstrong—
When she was eighty-five
Her singing voice was gone but
Oh, could she still whistle.

Pamela den Ouden, Fort St. John
Honourable Mention