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## Ivan Younge

### Sewing Lesson

Mother stitched ring quilts,  
made me test the seams,  
made me hold the threads  
as she sewed her words  
into her grandmother's image.

She laced pie with cinnamon  
as her fingers worked shapes in moist flour,  
pulled threads of fragile crust into the lie  
of lattice work.

She sang the hymn of canning figs,  
the mistakes of making wine,  
watching it wash away in water as she  
mopped it from a pantry wall.  
She passed on the catechism of roses,  
the ritual of clabbered milk,  
the rites of fresh morning biscuits.

These were the shadows mother sewed.  
She wove a woman  
in words, in the craft  
her fingers had learned. These  
are the only memories I have of Granny  
beyond the one

of her in a nursing home,  
paper napkin laid soft against her palms  
like fine silk, touching her fingers to it  
as if stitching the machined imprint,  
saying to me *This is for you,*  
*I made this for you.*