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Mama

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Mama

by Margaret Shelton

She drinks from the yellow cup with black flecks in the plastic,
sets crystal glasses
and paper napkins on the table.

Her touch is a satin pressure,
an old clean cotton top sheet
thrown into the air
and sighing back down.

Fingers smooth and brushing along my skin.
Quiet calligraphed *I love you* across my wrist.

She teaches me to sew a white wedding dress,
doll-sized.

The buttons are plastic pearls.
(I keep her winks in a clear bookcase in my brain. Open it.
Smell the lavender.)

I drink from her mother's tea set.
I keep her old string of beads in my jewelry box.
On the fourth finger of my left hand,
I wear her husband's wedding ring,
a circle of beaten gold.