

FROM MY GRANDMOTHER

JADE SHAW

I wear my grandmother's elbows
soft folds of skin like gold coins

pale and remarkably familiar but
for a long scar that spills through my

right side poured out
of a metal wagon to which
I'd hitched with jump ropes
our old shepherd mix

barking *mush!*
with a grin, with-
out knowing she knew
what it'd meant

now even the summer's fat moon
seems to make my palms slick

and from my grandmother, I've learned
I ought to keep her raw strawberries
safe from the drunk bellies of earwigs

instead of writing about them.

*sometimes, grandmother
I am like hot tea in the sun
spiced cinnamon and honey
left out on long September days*

leave me on the porch
leave me by the fireplace
leave me in the sea

*sometimes, I am fenceless
at once young and old, gold
and wild and so temporary*