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A Photo of my Grandparents, 1954

Brianna Carnley

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A PHOTO OF MY GRANDPARENTS, 1954

Brianna Carnley

Her hair molten, curled for the pew,
rippling down oak through the bible's estranged spine.

She couldn't prophesize his pulpit,
his pride the splintering planks.

Her shoulder carves into his chest,
his thumbnail gouging a pencil eraser.

Her checks peach with rouge,
blouse buttoned to her throat, her first commandment.

Her lips condensed to a flat smile,
her alto reply, 'thy strength indeed is small.'

Her fist buried with his in prayer,
'he shall go out by himself.'