

suzanne buffam / GRANDMOTHER

there were those candles she gave me for christmas that dripped different colours as they burned and were magic she told me they'd drip orange then blue then dark purple although white outside colourless like her face and

the rain dripping down our faces while we stand at this railing returning on the ferry to our new home in vancouver remembering how she stood there waving clumsy goodbyes like a child asking can i can i can i why can't i

show you the time when i was the child and she really was magic her house on the hill full with seashells and marbles and bathcubes dripping colour into the bathwater ocean green tub and her paintings in the basement more

beautiful to me than even the sound of my own name those dripping colours like rain down the canvasses that i searched for illusions for conjured up images tricks of the eye so quietly hidden for me by her magician's hands

which over a lifetime stacked wall to wall to the ceiling grey landscapes and butterflies gifts to my mother that came down from our walls when she left our plum-colour walls that clashed with my grandmother's perfect art

like the pink dress she made with red ladybird smocking that i wore again and again until it hung in my closet colourless as her hands as your eyes that passed over her shelves of food canned long before we were born your

thoughts of how old she must be how forgetful how sweet how much i hated you then for not knowing her the way i did for not believing in her magic and how i hate myself now for being able to see her the way that you must

for knowing what made the colours drip from inside the candles and seeing how she stood there without that flush of a child not magic or mysterious but lost forgetful her cheek now colourless like an old old woman's alone