Your words in my mouth flattened my tongue and stained like coins that rusted onto my gums in
Their metallic twang
And then when finally I could choke them back their sliced fragments echoed the dicing of dimes
That I heard ch-chang every time we’d cross a road in Midtown,
Your purple-flowered pinned purse clutched beneath the Goodwill flannel and
Even tighter your right hand clutching mine
Saying what I couldn’t and probably wouldn’t say
Whispering back
Putting the honks and the screams and the city scum to sedated slumber
Whispering back from the receding yew you
Embroidered on Papik’s work socks
The same whispering back Noah heard from high on Ararat
As voch’kharner welcomed him, grazing,
The same whispering you heard your own tatik
Soothe over you
Like a halo you were crowned
Gleaming still in those lonely nights huddled in hiding basements damp
The same whispering I stuttered into
Ch-Chang-ing coins that clatter still
While your right hand clutches mine still
I know I never paid much attention to you while you were around,
But at eight years old
When school resumed in early January
And Kate Jacob and Charlie all rambled
On of new shoes and dolls and stuffed bears
I only could mentioned how you always prayed with your hands facing down
As if somehow the cracks in your hands aligned with mine
And said what our mouths couldn't
In our gnarled embrace all down that road in Midtown
And I just knew you knew of a time
Vacant of God
A plane vacant of God
Where the winded sand whipped before settling on the bodies
That heaped into
The slabs where shadows once stood
That heaped into
Bodies of little ant hills rolling on the plane
Vacant of God
And I just knew you knew of a time
Where you'd sit by a window silly
And think if you held your hands up just high enough
Those cracks could ride onto the corner of the
Sky with you and expand
Like the silhouette of a t’rrch’un on the horizon,
With wings wide enough to withstand you and Tatik, Papik, Mayrik, Hayrik, Anahid, and Arax
And feathers to fix all your fears with their float
And soft songs to steady you from the sights
Of lonely nights huddled in hiding basements damp.
If I had turned to you on Midtown
If I had braced through the metallic twang of words that
Flattened my tongue and stained like coins that rusted onto my gums
Or if my own cracks in my own hands
In our gnarled embrace
Could repeat the same
Whispering back
The same whispering back Noah heard from high on Ararat
As voch’kharner welcomed him, grazing.
I would whisper back to you
Like the secluded halo you were crowned
And ask you
If one graveyard is better than the other.

Խորա պես ընկնել ով Ամերիկա
Խորա պես ընկնել ով Ամերիկա