

Beautiful Hands

Tears slide down my cheeks
as I watch you from the kitchen door.

Inside, you struggle to sort strawberries
into the colander.
Your large, swollen hands
select a berry, careful to avoid bruising,
rinse it, put it in the sieve.

It will become part of my dessert.
An offering to make up
for difficulties since your illness.

I watch your hands, once beautiful and talented,
now gnarled, misshapen.
Your little finger juts at an angle,
a reminder of bones that cannot heal.

Backing quietly from the door,
I rearrange my face into a smile,
come noisily into the room.

You wipe your hands, pull
me into your arms.

I feel your pain-filled hands
on my body.

They are beautiful again.

Judy Beerman