

LEANNE AVERBACH

Grandfather's Hand

I don't remember the time
not yet four
I climbed into his cool lap
guided by that ringed hand like gold tongs
missing the trigger finger—the least
he could give to dodge Russian wars—
and his gray eyes
rolled high up, proud, into his hairless
onion head, his great gold filled mouth
opening too wide
as he bragged that my heart's desire was
a Cadillac.

Though it was the rich, candy-coloured
gloss
of the Hudson's Bay catalogue I'd asked for
the joy his error gave him so filled the
room that day
it became family lore, close to a memory
of the old cold man who wore spats in the
old country
and a swaggering fist in the new
leaving this, The Cadillac Legend, for my
moral
direction.

But I would be lying if I said
it didn't hold me in good stead
as I went out into the world
and dreamed of driving
injustice into the sea
learned to labour a week over a line of
verse
or the magnificent scent of a
lover's uncoiling groin.

Nor did my *zeyda** and his invisible hand
fail to come to mind as I discovered dawn
could arrive barefoot or a child laugh with
me
and that would be
more than enough.

**zeyda* means "grandfather" in Yiddish.

Leanne Averbach's writing has appeared in Sub-Terrain, The Vancouver Sun, Descant, Antigonish Review, New Quarterly, Dalhousie Review, Event, Poetry New Zealand and Landmarks 2000 Project.

CINDY SUTHERLAND

For My Grandmother's House

I am longing to come back to you.
To tables laden,
to rooms alive with love and laughter.
I am longing to sink
deep into the warm, bubble-brimming
place,
where the waning daylight lingers
and the stillness makes music of the waters'
splashings.

I am longing too,
for that feather filled bed, high up the steep
steps.
The room with the sloped roof and the
(secret) window.
The giggling and cuddling with other-
warm-child-flesh world.
The blanket tents and flashlight readings.

or

Outside on the porch:
The soft-night-sounds/cool breeze/whis-
pering world;
the place with the infinite sky.
I am longing to come back to you.
To warmth and acceptance,
a radiance bounded by blood
and history.

And freedom....
To go without explanation
and upon return, flushed pink and hungry,
to be embraced and led to a place at the
table.

I am longing....

Cindy Sutherland has just completed her Masters of Arts degree at the School of Community and Regional Planning at the University of British Columbia. She lives with her children and husband, Michael, in a beautiful cottage with a thriving garden on the ocean in Roberts Creek, British Columbia.