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Mother's Daughter

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Mother's Daughter

Elizabeth Guevara

Two of my cousins joined the army last year.
One did it to find his passion,
the other to support his family.
Two of my other cousins became teachers last year.
One did it to find her passion,
the other to start her family.

Living in their childhood towns and homes.
So that they may make new memories,
where the old ones still lurk.

The boys followed our grandfather into the military,
the girls went with their mothers into teaching.
Our ancestors, who passed down these desires.
To the boys: the need to take arms at the innocent.
To the girls: the need to mend the arms of the innocent.
Equally desperate, with two different paths to follow.

So then,
what is the present?
If not a reprise of the past.

Some nights I lie very still,
and I can hear my family breathe.
I fall into rhythm with them, breathing the same stale air.
But some nights I dream of a new life.
One where I'm so far that their breaths don't reach me
and I can gasp freely.

But I know that old air has snuggled into my lungs.
Because I am not my mother,
but I am my mother's daughter.



Channeling Audrey

Karen Stepherson