

Grandma

Tall golden racemes, shimmering in the summer sun,
Your 'golden rods' flowering in the deep border.
I remember you, pretty, petite, and very round,
Emerging from this heightened glory and peering at me
As I entered your garden.

The pond into which I
Fell, dark and deep, the fascination of the moving golden life,
But different to the gold of those tall plants above; more red I thought.
Over-reaching, over-stretching, then-splash! Humiliation,
I was an older child and should know better.
No fuss, I got out, dried off and went in to tea.

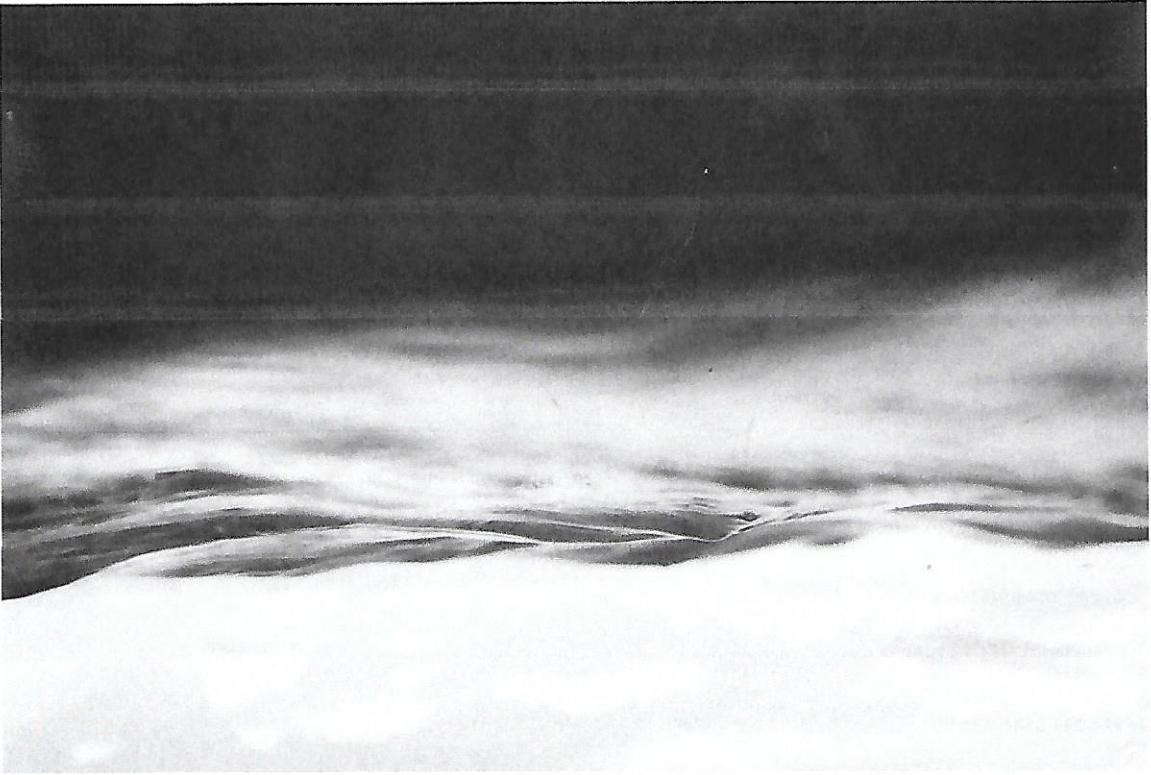
China cups, gold rim, purple flowers and so pretty
In a glass cabinet, but we did not drink from these.
When did you use them?
Sideboard of dark oak and the wooden biscuit barrel
With a chrome handle, not a biscuit inside, but
Often a ten shilling note for me!

The day you died I cried, as the funeral cars left the house
And I was looking inside your glass trinket set,
On your dressing table as I was used to do.
Found the crocodile brooch with tiny coloured glass beads I
thought were crystals when I was young---
A birthday present to you my grandma---from me.

You lived in different houses over the years
I remember them well, the one with the pond I see to this day
When I pass it over the hill.
But now they are all merging
Into the background of life, but you shine brightly in my memory.



And now I am thinking of you as a young woman
Giving birth to your first child on a boat,
Alone on that immigrant boat of your youth.
To England and your husband
Waiting at the port.
A kind British customs man
You tried hard to understand
What he was saying- a language barrier
And there'd be more
In this free country.
Hard working immigrants flocking to meet loved ones.
Tears, laughter, shouting and crying.
Anticipation, uncertainty
Humble, sad and grateful
A mélange of feelings in your face
As you hide it in your Russian shawl.
A moment of desperation
"Where is he you ask?" – no one understands.
Others too are searching for families from another land
A land they loved but now they fear
But now their loved ones are here.
Safe and sound how well they'll be
After that journey across the sea.
You try to be more patient
Thinking of good things to come
Of family waiting to welcome you
And the little one.



I see your smiling face

Aching tiredness gone

Relief in the reuniting

At long last- the journey done.

Proud and happy your husband

is quickly guiding you both

Through the crowds to your new home.

469 words