

Junior Division, Poetry
Rhianna Bishop, St. John's

Hands (an excerpt)

My grandmother cannot bake
She spoils everything but bread.
Says that it is because she has her father's hands.
Large, strong and rough.

He worked in the mines on Bell Island,
In the day with the men, but in the evenings,
For one hundred dollars more,
He would load a coal car by himself.

The coal miner had the hands of his father,
A fisherman by trade, who on land,
Was as harsh a master as the sea,
Settling scores with his fists to protect his own.

A paladin, like my twice great grandmother,
Who walked for hours in snow and rain.
Delivering babies while the Harbor Grace doctor,
Enjoyed the comfort of his bed and the warmth of his fire.

I have their hands, but mine run the stacks in the library,
Because what they dared only dream to pass time,
Between shunting coal, mending nets and contractions,
Has been realized in me.