

## The Hidden · Carolyn Marsden

At 15 I cut your photo  
from the other family faces  
and hid that oval  
deep in a white prom glove.  
Mother's physicist cousin,  
twice my age and a father besides,  
you could name each star  
in the sky's slow wheel.

Now our family broods together  
in the hall of round and yellow  
prison tables. I am shocked and yet not,  
as at the two pairs  
of legs in the bathroom stall.  
The relatives whisper  
of girls, *little* girls  
who were not your fault,  
but the lawbooks specify.

Out back the peppertree dropped  
plump red kernels over the telescope.  
The night I asked to see the dippers  
we both knew: it was once  
too often. What was I looking for?  
I remember you said if we could see on and on  
it would be the backs of our own heads,  
the unseen parts of ourselves brought to light.