

tissue-paper heart now  
 crinkled at the edges, her  
 breath like autumn frost  
 a chill after moonrise on  
 September evenings. In her  
 home, quiet as the fog, she  
 looks for him everywhere--  
 in her wallet, in greeting  
 cards with smiling faces.  
 She waits for azaleas to  
 bloom in the winter.

A tiny house by the highway  
 is alive in the darkness with  
 a light on in the window,  
 its heart beating only for one,  
 a sixty-eight-year-old woman  
 without even a pet for a com-  
 panion, only the nightly news  
 on the radio and canned foods  
 in her cupboards to live on.  
 Just last week someone sent  
 her a belated sympathy card  
 when her husband had died  
 two months ago, enclosing  
 pressed flowers: hawthorns,  
 pieces of sunflowers. Her

#### Azaleas

Inside light is bending through  
 the linen curtains to lie on  
 the carpet like a reflective  
 pool. Throw pillows from  
 a white sale are part of the  
 gift; and, in the hunger of  
 time, the rest is all marzipan  
 and the crisp snap of freshly  
 washed sheets. They billow  
 over the bed before sighing  
 smoothly inside the room.  
 She traces the gentle sound  
 of patience, the outline of  
 grandeur encircling her days.

Every day precisely at ten  
 the girl who lived on the smell  
 of flowers would begin her  
 decoupage. She cuts out stars  
 for the sky and arrows of moon-  
 light. Her moods are like fogs;  
 they settle and lift, and the  
 scents she loved would suffuse  
 and evaporate. As she adds  
 the finishing touches with her  
 face fingertips to the top of  
 the box she longs to be a bird  
 swaying on top of a leaf.

#### Flowers and Decoupage

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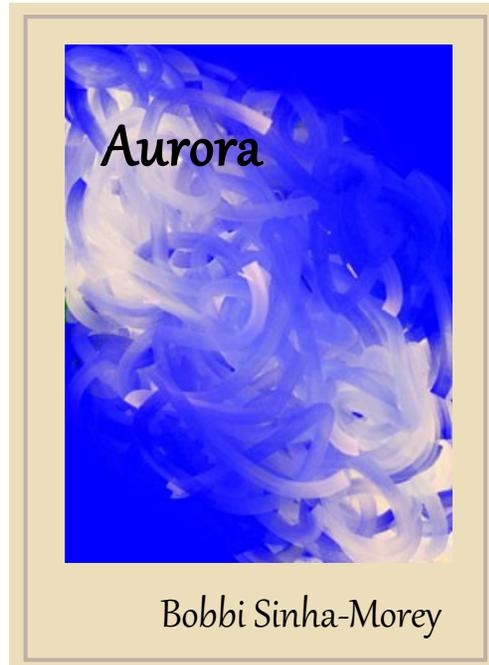
**Origami Poetry Project™**

**Aurora**

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#### Aurora

My new world is not yet  
 fully awake: birds perch on  
 limbs to watch the dawn  
 and dew on the cornstalks  
 turn into sweet, idyllic tears  
 from a young lass who shyly  
 left her hope like the sun  
 quietly closes the day. I walk  
 my mid-mornings around  
 the field and saw her again,  
 among dandelions heavy  
 with sun, picking delphiniums  
 one by one, her flowing white  
 taffeta dress pooled at her  
 feet; the brown feathered  
 curve of her hair waving  
 in the hushed voice of the  
 wind. Her whispered wishes  
 and prayers, though greater  
 than the sun, likely unheard.

When she looked up at me  
 she spilled her handful of  
 flowers into the grass and  
 left me standing still. I brought  
 them home, put them in the  
 milk pitcher on the windowsill.  
 My heartbeat longs to hear  
 her quiet breath. I see her only  
 when the morning star has left.