

FRANK

Feelings move the body around  
 more than any muscle or sinew.  
 For example, I don't just travel places.  
 I go exactly where my heart tells me to.

When Frank died in that car accident,  
 my head thrummed, fingers knotted,  
 I lost six babies, my skin broke out  
 in plague, and my liver grew more tumors  
 than the population of Chernobyl.

At the wake, doctors operated on me  
 to no avail.  
 During that long funeral procession,  
 I couldn't believe how the undertakers  
 didn't toss my dead weight into the coffin  
 beside my lifelong friend.

Yet, everything began to heal after that.  
 Good memories cleared warts.  
 Acceptance stopped brain cancer in its tracks.

Frank was gone  
 but there were other people in my life,  
 all nearby, all still living.  
 Each was a prescription  
 long in advance of the disease.

They lost perspective  
 when they opened their eyes,  
 unfolded their hands,  
 like gunfire  
 snapped the cords that  
 sent us kids recolling.  
 Astride white mounts  
 of opened doors and half-light,  
 they gave edicts  
 to the paupers in the dark.  
 With voices louder  
 than midnight rain,  
 they shattered our rooftops.  
 Hard to believe that cows  
 chewing through the snow  
 to get the grass were them  
 or birds chirping  
 the fleeting birth seasons  
 come to an end.

EXCERPT FROM THE BOOK ON PARENTS

In room after room,  
 they built ponderous mills  
 they said were castles  
 with slow turning wheels  
 and loud and rusty machinery.  
 of food and drink,  
 out of cloth and wallets  
 thin on the money ground.  
 They were ever anxious  
 to tell us everything is patience,  
 to add children should  
 be seen and not heard  
 and occasionally discarded.  
 With weary voices,  
 they said we look forward  
 to the day when our great labors  
 come to an end.  
 They made looking forward sound like  
 the hardest work imaginable.

Please recycle... to a friend.

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by Kevin Keough

Origami Poetry Project™

Excerpt from the Book  
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**Excerpt from the Book**



**John Grey**

### MATRIARCH

I remember my grandmother  
 who, after a lifetime of noontday-sun-avoidance,  
 had skin like pink porcelain,  
 not a wrinkle to be had  
 and yet, no mistaking her for someone younger.

For she was old like sea-glass or shells,  
 like the outside walls of the Providence courthouse  
 or the various architectural splendors  
 of the east side, or trees like birch  
 that turn shiny silver when they hit their century.

She was strong, not from muscle and bone,  
 which were frail when I knew her,  
 but of years lived, of tales recounted,  
 of people she knew and could, even then, remember.

Other people died young.  
 But she lived well into her nineties.  
 As her days wore on,  
 time found her increasingly necessary.