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Mother's Love

Luisa Rodríguez Connal

The University of Arizona, luisa.stardancer@gmail.com

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Mother's Love

I remember the first time we met.
You tall dressed in black with a black hair cover
It had a veil pinned to it.
A silver heart pinned in the middle of the front of your cape.
You were a beacon moving me toward you.

The black did not hide your face nor your smile.
I the short impetuous friendly girl child
I liked you from the start.

Servant woman took me to meet you
I ran sensing love
After speaking a little I told you, "I like you."
"Your funny maybe like Bob Hope"

Matilda stupefied, exclaimed, "Don't speak to Mother Theckla like that."
Mother Theckla said, "Let her speak. And we both laughed."

Weeks later or perhaps years later I ran to you in need of comfort.
One of the other nuns announced.
No one who was NOT a Catholic could enter heaven.
Heartbroken, I ran to you. Do you remember?

You gave me a view of changes to come.
I repeated the other nun's claim.

Smiling gently she asked why that news distressed me so.
I answered: "I love Abraham Lincoln"
He shouldn't have to go to hell because he's not a Catholic.

You held me close and said: "Child, Mr. Lincoln indeed was a good person.
Anyone who believes in God and practices his beliefs will NOT go to hell.
He did good and practiced his faith.
Assuredly Mr. Lincoln is in Heaven.

At another time I moved to the dormitory you monitored
I wondered then how it was you did not scold me so harshly when I was caught—penlight in
hand, head under my pillow, reading the Nancy Drew Mysteries.
I'd just feel a pat and a request turn off that light and go to sleep.

Later, another girl would not go to bed as told to.
She had to her put hair "old lady like" in rollers.
Some fast Italian spewed out of your mouth.
You reported the stubborn girl to Mother Superior.

It turned out you needed privacy to take your bath or shower. You did not want to be seen out of your habit.

I remember your playfulness. In winter we made many snowballs. One team piled theirs on one sled. The other team piled theirs on another sled. You threw out the first ball. I loved it.

Everyone, including you and two other nuns along with the “girls” were all wet. Such fun and our snow suits and boots did little to protect us.

I admired you for your calm exterior, your ability to reach me at my level and you inspired great loyalty from many of us. I know I was not alone in my admiration of a wonderful mother/nun/teacher and dare I say friend.

Mother Theckla I increasingly loved you
Because of your kindness.
Away from my family, I found the kind of mother that I needed.
No matter the time between my youth and my old age.
You are in my heart.