

## FAMILY PORTRAITS

### AUNT MAG

She gardened her whole life, letting things sprout  
where they would, letting things be to see just  
what arrangement chance could design, the landscape  
a constant surprise, no catalog of weeds even.

She trimmed and pruned, scratching the earth to get  
at the root of things, gentling new growth, adding  
color when the season dictated, borrowing mulch  
from the dead oak to lend to the new seedlings.

But she hesitated to rearrange things, observed rather,  
like a silent masonry statue with only the suggestion of a smile.

### WALLY'S LAVENDER LEGACY

When she was gone and I sorted her things  
I found tucked away, discreetly bereft,  
beneath stacks of towels, linens and things,  
a legacy of lavender she'd left.  
Old English Lavender was how she coped.  
Her lingerie drawer cradled bar after bar  
of chipped oval hues of antique brown soap,  
opening doors only scent kept ajar.

I had thought to sort, to toss, to hurry.  
I had not counted on a lavender link.  
But stubborn memories will not be buried  
and goodbye is never the death we think.  
Now her lavender memories crowd my rooms  
like bottles — bottles! — of hoarded perfumes.

— Trecia R. Greene