Mother's Poem

by Christina Canalizo

The monsters in the sky
burst with riotous laughter,
their rumbling voices
barking out commands,
their cracked nails
scratching on the screen,
their knotted knuckles
tap-taping on the window.
Little girl, won't you come out to play?
She clutches her floral bed sheets,
waiting and watching and whimpering
and hoping that a stuffed animal
can shield her from the hungry beasts.
“Go away,” she mumbles.
“You're not real. Momma promised—”
Lightening flares
like the fear in her eyes.
The drowsy hum of the house
is pierced by an infant's cry,
then
doors opening and closing,
slippers scuffling over wooden floors,
toes tripping and stubbing,
sheets peeled back from an ashen face,
big hands slipping into small.
One touch,
gentle and familiar,
and the babe is reassured.
Mother will not abandon you.
Mother will forever love you.
Mother, oh mother.

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One touch
and my heart is reassured.