

Calluses

by Johnny Dantonio

My Grandma caressed
my sleeping Grandfather's feet
as we sat in his hospital room after hours.

Without breaking motion,
she giggled and whispered to me about
how mean he was to her when they were children:

"Ever since,"
she went on,
"every day has felt like romantic apologies for first grade fights."

As the respirator's song sped,
I watched her steady smile,
her hands staying within the smooth arches
between callused heel and toe.

