

17 Days

by Linda Simoni-Wastila

Sometimes, under the gauze and yellow salves, under the allografts patching your body like so many potato and corn fields planting God's earth, I glimpse you, the real you, my twinned soul from before, the brother who rode me on handle-bars, who beat up the bully on the bus, who read me to sleep when we were kids, the way I read to you now, and that's when I grip your hand, the good one, glad the explosion incinerated the poison inside even if it burned off your smile, because now you are yourself, pure, saved, clean these 17 days.

