

Sundays

by Tawnysha Greene

Momma's hands smell of vanilla. Except on Sundays, when they smell of honeysuckle stems and garden soil. Branches scrape the bathroom window from outside.

It is morning. It is May, because her tulips are blooming.

Momma wears a white camisole and slip. Her feet are bare. She puts white lotion on her face and leaves the blue container open for me to play with. Her earrings are silver hoops with blue leaves inside, like peacock feathers.

Daddy's in the kitchen. It is loud. Dishes clatter in the sink.

He's making pancakes.

Momma holds a curling iron in her hands and I hear its click as she opens and closes it on her hair. She turns and does the same to mine.

Momma gets out the hairspray. She tells me to close my eyes and I do.

When I open them, hers are still closed.

The strap of her camisole has fallen, the hand holding the hair spray still in the air. The mist falls and my face feels sticky. I touch the bruises on her arm. Some are red, some are blue.

"Daddy didn't mean to," she says.

When we eat breakfast, Daddy puts bacon on my plate and sprinkles powdered sugar on my pancakes.

