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Grandmother's Tongue: Inheritance

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### Grandmother's Tongue: Inheritance

Because she's old and short and brown;  
because she walks the same route as those in cars  
and with heavy grocery bags gripped in steady wrists;

because she'll put back the onion not on sale  
after all; because she's rich  
beyond wildest dreams and she's not telling; and

because as beggar Christ gets turned away from fine  
men's doors, her appearance so often annoys  
those who cannot fathom

the worth of an old immigrant lady. Once,  
within the fluorescent scene of a superstore,  
Grandmother and I shop for cloth.

She asks a fabric cutter, *Esa like this blue,*  
*pero, more strong:* her request reaches

a woman turning her eyes away;  
she huffsighs, says, *Hold it. I need*  
*a translator. I don't speak that language.* Stunned,

I retreat commiserating, *Can you believe—*  
but beside me, she saunters,  
arms over the bar of her cart. *Some people's no*

*happy,* she says coolly, like she's spitting sunflower seeds,  
and offers a quick-eyed grin that slips into laughter,  
that rises like song as we leave.

And we move through wide  
sliding doors that part just  
for us—two little Mexicans, inheriting the earth.

L. E. HUIZAR