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My Mother's Hands

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My Mother's Hands

Rosa Elena Mercado

I see my mother cooking in the kitchen.
Rice and beans. The usual.
Her hands work quick on the stove like a fine-tuned machine,
rushing to make food
before my father comes home from work.

It's 7 in the morning.
My mother helps me bathe and dress.
I watch T.V. while she slicks my hair into a ponytail
When it's almost time for school, we leave.
We walk together down the busy streets,
full of cars and noise.
But the chaos doesn't bother me
because I have my mother by my side.
Hurried steps and quickened pace,
we continue down the road,
hand in hand.

My mother, my best friend, my companion, my everything.
Amá, you keep the world from crashing down on me.
You hold it up with hands adorned in liver spots.
With hands who've seen the fields and the factories
and who've held the family together for years.
Whose hands hold me, overflowing with comfort,
and fill me with light to eradicate my darkness.
Whose hands I fear to someday never hold again
but whose warmth engraved an everlasting print on my soul.