

# Walking with My Delaware Grandfather

By Denise Low

Walking home I feel a presence following  
and realize he is always there

that Native man with coal-black-hair who is  
my grandfather. In my first memories

he is present, mostly wordless,  
resident in the house where I was born.

My mother shows him the cleft in my chin  
identical to his. I am swaddled

and blinking in the kitchen light. So  
we are introduced. We never part.

Sometimes I forget he lodges in my house still  
the bone-house where my heart beats.

I carry his mother's framework  
a sturdy structure. I learn his birthright.

I hear his mother's teachings through  
what my mother said of her:


She kept a pot of stew on the stove  
all day for anyone to eat.

She never went to church but said  
you could be a good person anyway.

She fed hoboes during the '30s,  
her back porch a regular stop-over.

Every person has rights no matter  
what color. Be respectful.

This son of hers, my grandfather,  
still walks the streets with me.



Some twist of blood and heat still spark  
across the time bridge. Here, listen:

Air draws through these lungs made from his.  
His blood still pulses through this hand.

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