

Braid

Onjana Yawnghe

Even with hands

cracked from cleaning

still she beckons me

to sit by her lap

amidst the sound of cars rushing

past the hum of evergreens

and mountains that loom

over our small apartment.

She begins to braid

humming Connie Francis tunes

but only later do I wonder

what she dreamed of.

If she longed for late afternoons

when geckoes begin to appear

when the air is draped with mangoes

and reckless chirrup.

Her fingers dreamed forests for me
as her hands twist and pull hard
so that I wouldn't break.

Under her palms I fall
under the tops of trees
into warmth and spice and waving sunlight
into memories of green and sky
and a land where she fits.

Through the tough pull
and tug of hair

bare and strong
her hands tumble
me into her sarong.