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frying fritters

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frying fritters

the grease sputtered as she dropped
 fritters one by one in the pan.
 ashes formed an ethereal wand
 between her knuckles, disappearing
 in the grease when she coughed.
 the fritters bobbed and bounced
 unmindful of the intrusion.
 automatic she grabbed the salem
 on the counter and lit from the flame
 under the skillet. the shrill bell
 of the oven timer rose over the chattering
 fritters. she picked up the phone
 but nothing — silence, not realizing
 it was only her cake calling.
 her mother pushed past, muttering
 grabbed the broom and broke a straw
 to test if it came out clean
 took the receiver from her daughter
 and placed it back on the hook.

Liz Bolyard '96

For Katherine

One hundred miles north, my grandmother's bones
 are collapsing. Chemotherapy (she
 calls it 'evil medicine') unmerci-
 ful as a truck on ice, slams her. She phones

Sunday mornings to ask about exams,
 Christine at OU, college football scores.
 With a nasty headache and hangover,
 I lie to her, "three finals, I must cram."

Christmas is near. The soft red candlelight
 hangs shadows across the creaky loft.
 Last night a couple specks of snow, polite

as a theatre crowd, swirled around the quad
 and dropped like dust. If Grandma had the strength,
 she'd rise from her bed and wondrously applaud.

Carl Boon '96