

Grandmother As Flamingo by Christian Ward

My grandmother is turning into a flamingo:
She already sports a shepherd's crook
for a neck, legs as thin as garden canes,
and webbed flippers pilfered from bats
for feet. Soon a curved ballet pump of a beak,
mussel-black, will take the place of her mouth.
Arms will be lost to a carnival of feathers.
Eyes, once borrowed from a spring sky,
will be tangerine marbles. She's started learning
the ways of the flamingo while sleepwalking:
shucking bathwater for imaginary shrimps,
standing on one leg in the kitchen as the full moon
tuts, and scanning the horizon for the best weather
for flight. I won't be able to stop my grandmother
once she's ready to take off from the garden,
can only hope her newfound freedom
might untether me from the apathy she left behind,
grounding me for years.

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