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An Interview with Grace Carlson

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Children's Dreams

1.

Here comes grandfather, old mummer,
and his fingers are clams
or castanets,
clacking over your head.
Wherever he goes,

the air turns black as the mouths
of pianos, and behind him
your father dances in
out of the darkness,
commanding you to live, to sit up,

while your grandfather raises you
on his shoulders
where there is no place
for you to turn to,
no room for your fear.

2.

In the fields the sacks of potatoes
are fathers
filling their lives
with shadows.
From the north the geese are crossing.
Out of the sky,
they grow larger
as they come falling
into your crib
where you can almost touch them.
They are sturgeons,
or flying men,
and they are coming
just for you, little ones.
They will make you
grow larger, older,
you will become a hundred
pieces of yourself,
you will be fathers,

but this night in your crib
you wake crying,
and you want them,
you want them so.

Jay Meek