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## Grandma Betty

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## Grandma Betty

my earliest memory of dancing is with my grandma betty in her kitchen.  
she'd put on the radio, usually to a christian station, and twirl  
me around, singing about the lord's love. and i don't believe  
in any religion now, but i still believe i felt a higher  
power in that house. those four walls provided me more  
safety than my parents ever did. and i don't know  
if god is real, if jesus existed, if those  
gates are real or pearlescent but i do  
know that my heart never felt more  
full than spinning around with  
my grandma, cooking french  
toast, and laughing  
before i had  
any idea  
how  
low  
life was  
going to take  
me. and sometimes  
when i'm alone in my  
safe, quiet apartment, i'll  
turn on music and close my eyes  
and i'll twirl and spin and sway and  
dance just like grandma did with me. and  
i had a different name then and gender and  
religion and home and life. but somehow i'm still  
dancing with my grandma betty in her kitchen and feeling  
like somehow there's some greater power out there holding fast  
and its breath to make sure that i make it to the next day again  
and again and i think i met that higher power in my grandma's kitchen.

**Jameson Kay Olson Buckau** (2002) is a graduate teaching assistant and master's student in the English Department. He did his undergrad at Black Hills State University in South Dakota. He has lived in many places across North America and enjoys traveling, which inspires a lot of his writing. He's queer and trans, has a dog named Bailey, and has a deep love for queer and gender studies in literature as well as the unending fight for all people's liberation under the powers of colonialism and white supremacy.