

ERINIA

You could always count on Erinia's eyes.
She listened to you with them, heard it all,
what you didn't say with words. Her eyes
were country cures, not old wives' tales
like Aunt Vi's--squinty, darting, doubtful.

Erinia was wise-warm in the eyes,
although blue is a cool color.
She made you think of summer irises
on apple crunch mornings. North winds
forgot to snap and bite when she smiled.

You'll never find a better definition
of beauty than Erinia, but she wasn't pretty.
Her thicket of sable eyelashes defied
the years stored beneath, age that comes
from hearing of the heart. If you looked,
you could see those indigo shadows were old
as change or sorrow. She knew where
she was, held steady to where she was going.

Her verbs were seeds, her prayers oak trunks.
Even Aunt Vi admitted
it was just like her to leave us nothing
but good things when she was gone.

--Glenna Holloway