

THE AMULET

It could have touched
Bathsheba's oiled and perfumed skin,
a scarab cabochon in beaten gold,
jewel unidentified.

Once, a royal gemsmith thought he saw
the pigeon's blood of rarest ruby
when prongs of light probed deep
in domed catacombs. Moonwash
made a poet call it Cleopatra's opal,
beside the sea it was Ho's lost jade,
in winter rain a star sapphire for Sappho.
But it was none of these.

Harder, fairer than diamond,
some stranger, stronger radiance
rose from fires of ancient forces
creating corundum and purest carbon--
some overwhelming source,
spectral power unsuspected. Inside
refraction's core, in secret wicks
of atoms-- a genesis of hope
and something's home--

Perhaps it was meant always to be worn
unnamed
into the unknown darkness.

--Glenna Holloway