

Hidden

Ormila Vijaykrishnan Prahlad

held at arm's length
in a bracketed childhood
nana wasn't the kind
to gaze on her babes
with eyelids soft
smother with kisses
wrap loving arms
whisper bedtime stories
there's no memory
of words of endearment
or the feel of her pale pink hands
the scent of her skin
the timbre of her voice.

but there's the unforgettable image of her
waiting hunched
by the old French windows
lit by the halo
of afternoon sun
streaking fire through her tungsten hair
holding a petri dish
with floating pomegranate pearls
her outstretched fingers transforming
into fragile tendrils
comforting the white hot spines
of the drooping sparrows
that flew in panting
from the July heat.

Ormila Vijaykrishnan Prahlad is a Sydney artist, poet, and improv pianist of Indian heritage. She's a member of the North Shore Poetry Project and Authora Australis. Her recent works have been published in Neologism, Nine Muses Poetry, Active Muse, and several other literary

journals in the US, UK, India, and Australia. Oormila regularly performs her poetry at venues in Sydney.