

# Fried Chicken Love

Grandpa comes bearing  
fried chicken love;  
battered tin foil roasting pan  
piled high  
with golden brown  
pieces of  
*secret recipe chicken*  
delicate crumb crust  
tender morsels sealed  
in a conflagration of oil.

Grandpa has  
the hands of an old man now,  
his hands shake  
as he grasps the metal tongs;  
he turns the pieces of meat  
ever so gently,  
tenderly, even.

Dad, Uncle  
remember:  
stern glances, hard words  
his leather belt  
like bamboo correcting.

Yet later,  
after the frenzy,  
chastened,  
he brought you plates of

fried chicken, hamburger, fries  
you remember  
the delicious scent of grease  
filling your nostrils  
soothing your opened wounds.

Grandpa,

You offer up fried chicken  
as if you were laying out  
pieces of your naked heart.