

My Mother-in-Law Sent Sassafras Bark

to help me conceive.

I craved a daughter,
her face like my mother's,
made of sky and leaves
and gentle rain.

I wanted to carry her high
inside, her heft
latching to my heft, her body
a mandolin. Sometimes,
late at night, I hear her
on the stairs or rummaging
through boxes in the attic.
I don't get up. Whatever
she finds she can keep.
Whatever is mine is hers.

– Dannye Romine Powell