

Thanksgiving

Chopping celery in the gray dawn,
the crunch and snap of severed fibers,
the pungent scent of the stalk
carry me back to my mother's side
learning the rituals of slaughter
and feasting.

I am preparing a turkey, but
it is my mother's hands that reach
deep into the cold cavity,
bring forth liver, gizzard, heart, a bent neck;
her hands that mix sage, crumbs,
and the chopped celery with warm broth.

Later I will stir gravy, mash potatoes,
spread butter on brown 'n serve rolls.
It is my mother's knowledge that guides me,
as I chop, mix, and stir—stepping through
the doors of time carrying a platter
of pain and tradition.