

Brown

There is thought,
art and music
inside me
that shows only on paper –
or on the air,
if only you'd listen.

I work for what I have,
and give you half
without a thank you.

But I am brown
while you,
green and golden girl,
cannot add two and two
without your fingers,
or punctuate,
or make your own soup
without a fuss.

Aunt June sat with you
for hours at a time
when you were little,
still bald,
still wrinkled,
still pink.
She must have loved you best
because she gave you
her long legs,
sunny hair,
and sparkly eyes that catch the light
and hold it there,
like the ocean in the summer.

She is summer all year,
her name says so.

And she made you summer too
with pools and sun
that shone against your
fat pink cheek.

Mom gave you her piano fingers
but gave me her talent,
though my hands are
Grandma's working ones.
I'm brown like her.
But still she most often looks over me
to you,
already taller,
already curvy,
but lean,
and sunny,
like June.

You're spoiled.
You whine and cry –
keep as much as you can
for yourself,
and have since June
gave you colours.

I am thought,
art and music
in a brown package.
You are an empty box, wrapped in
shiny paper and a ribbon.

There are days when instead
of taking time to unwrap,
I'd rather trade.

Aimee Arsenault