

Granny

A Puzzle Portrait

Soft rubber lips
brandy scented and sweet
Prussian throated laughter

She didn't bake bread
She didn't knit booties
She did steal things sometimes

Terminally sixteen
Said Dr. Binswanger
From Kreutslingn
Who treated Zelda Fitzgerald
So he should know

She escaped Austria with charm
By train and her two daughters
"Yes we're the Nazi General's Family
Won't you join us for tea in the dining car."

She recited Heinrich Heine for me
I never understood German
She never recognized my voice
I sang Lehar Arias for her
She never forgot my birthday

Rheumatic bones scraped
Against eachother every minute
Of everyday pain
Father killed
Mother killed
Sister killed

Christian Brothers
Owes her a debt of gratitude
She downed a bottle of
Their forgiveness each day

I wish I could
forgive her or love
her or forget her

DEBORAH MILLER