**Grandmother by Sameeneeh Shirazie**

Sameeneeh Shirazie (1967- ) was born in Karachi, Pakistan. She grew up in a warm and loving family. Her grandmother, whom she greatly loved and admired, lived with them and probably also did the chores in the house. Shirazie, who respected her grandmother and saw her as a central figure in her own life, dedicated this poem to her.

**Form and Structure:** The poem consists of one long stanza. It has neither a regular rhyme pattern nor regular beat. Although the lines differ in their lengths, they are short and concise. Actually, this piece of literature is more a short account than a poem.

**Contents:** The speaker in the poem is a granddaughter, probably a young woman, who is describing a visit, like many others before, with her grandmother. She doesn't intend to stay for a long time, she is just passing by ("…I was simply going to say 'Salaam' and walk away"). However, when she asks her grandmother how she is feeling, it seems that her grandmother has just waited for the opportunity to share her thoughts, feelings and experiences with someone (even though they were quite simple and insignificant), so she tells her about her routine, her tiring chores ("…how she'd washed the sheets", "She'd also sunned the mattresses") and how she is getting weaker and older day by day ("…why the towel got so heavy…", "…such tired bones and so much to do"). The more she talks, the more the young lady realizes how she, and maybe all the other members of her family, take the grandmother for granted, relating to her impersonally, never stopping to think about her need for love and appreciation, seeing her just as an old life, another old person who'll die soon.

**Setting:** The poem takes place in the grandmother's room. It seems that it is late in the day, after she has finished her chores.

**Theme:** The central idea of the poem is the way we relate to members of our family, especially the elders. The message conveyed in this poem is that we mustn't take them for granted. The poem proves to us how important it is to listen to them and show care and sympathy. It also shows that family ties, in general, are very important and that we should spend more time with our loved ones.

**Tone:** The general atmosphere in the poem is love, care, compassion, but also sorrow and guilt.

**Analysis and Interpretation:** The poem "Grandmother" deals with a common issue: the relationship between different generations in the family, in this case a grandmother – granddaughter relationship in a close-knit family. When the granddaughter visits her grandmother, she doesn't intend to have a long conversation with her (" I hadn't asked her much, just how she felt…"). However, her grandmother's unexpected, honest reply makes her see her grandmother from a different perspective and brings the young woman to an important realization ("…and so many words would have been trapped inside") which causes her to feel emotional and filled with guilt ("…and my eyes filled with tears") – if she walked away, her grandmother would not have the chance to pour her heart and share her feelings. The granddaughter, and through her the readers too, realize that a routine greeting ("Hi, how are you?" not even waiting for the standard reply:"Fine, thank you!") is not enough, and old family members are human beings who deserve time, attention, respect, compassion and appreciation.

Source : Ort Motzkin website

<http://c3.ort.org.il/Apps/WW/page.aspx?ws=c82f9f5d-50df-47d2-ae09-8366503f6908&page=bde810e1-9cb7-4abb-a56f-04a57ef953a0&fol=00585db9-0ed9-4178-9981-e7a0dc834766&box=24e53a3c-3e71-48b7-866b-1c6c78439052&_pstate=item&_item=496d0a00-1f0f-47af-b0d7-61da31bb730b>

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