

Liz Marlow

Grandma Rubin's Piano

There was a time when she could hear
leaves brush against the ground,
cloth against cloth while crossing
her arms across her body.
When her doctor suggested she go
to a specialist for her hearing,
she nodded politely but never went.

Years later, she somehow could play
piano loud enough to reimagine
herself on Carnegie Hall's stage,
only twelve. After the performance,
her father took an axe to her piano
when it wouldn't fit through the door
of the new house. The first time

I saw her play, arthritis in her hands
seemed to disappear like a bird
with wings suddenly healed,
flying away from its nest. Her body
swayed gently like laundry hanging
from a line. I thought about
what it would be like

for a dolphin to no longer hear
others' whistles, for a nightingale
to no longer hear others' songs, and I
felt grateful that even though she could
no longer hear others' quiet voices,
at least she could still hear the piano.

Liz Marlow has an MFA and an MBA. Her poems have appeared in *The Binnacle Ultra-Short Edition*, *Deep South*, and *The Ekphrastic Review*.