

## Balm

In winter the skin on my hands will crack and bleed  
tearing at the corners of my thumbnails  
when I climb wash sleep pray  
and I will remember your  
sandpaper hands on  
my rose-cheeks  
as you tied  
my hood  
strings  
tight  
you  
took  
a blue  
mug of  
hot wheat  
cereal milk sugar  
with spoon from counter  
and pressed it in my mittens  
leave the mug at the bus stop you'd  
say and we'd rub noses and I'd know you  
loved me even though you seemed angry all the time