

—+ **CAROL OGDEN** | Her Golden Braid

Most hair grows grey  
in later years but her brown hair  
lightened to golden yellow,  
a golden yellow braid  
wound around her head  
with red cheeks white skin  
contagious laugh (showing false teeth)  
body-shaking stomach-hurting breath-gulping  
laughing with her.

How could she  
(this smiling hero)  
bind me with her golden braid?

Hairpins removed  
her plait unfurled and opened,  
a wavy cloak across her back  
her hand carried  
the sharp-tined steel comb  
long strokes through and through again,  
shiny glimmering silver on soft golden waves.

How could she,  
(mother of my mother)  
comb me with her cold, steel comb?

At night she gathered hair,  
crossed strand over strand  
twisted knots at her temples  
tied a pink hairnet over her nighted head,  
face so pale without rouge.

How could she,  
    (one I loved so)  
bind me with her golden locks?

A black and white photograph  
of her sits on my bookshelf,  
her golden braid grey forever  
in an oval, wooden frame.