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Where is Beauty?

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Where is Beauty?

The sky lifts her pettiskirts,
reveals a long blue stocking
just above Tamalpa, our mountain maiden, lying on her side,
hair sweeping the horizon.

I gaze on her thick grace.

Grandfather said a woman's true beauty shows in her slim ankles
and length of neck.

I said that's all you could see in 1914.

Then we granddaughter girls stood
in front of the one farm mirror, stretching, lifting the tops of our heads as high as our chins
could reach, measured our ankles with yellow tape, ran around the potato patch,
and measured again.

Our blue sky shifts uneasily now. Grandmother asks if there is enough blue
to patch a Dutchman's britches
and whispers, *Real beauty lies deep inside us.*

Donna Emerson