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My Father Told Me How My Grandma Died: A Sonnet

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by P.J. Bentley

Your mom and I—you see that?—carved our names right there. Now if you turn to this side here, the sun reflects the amber sap that ran into the cuts we made for letters... This. See this? (A giant wound) This happened when your grandma died, my mother. I was six.

July and fullmoon dark, past twilight. He’d had fourteen shots that night, the Friday prior to Easter. Mom had put her boy to bed and walked out to the tree to lay among its suckling feet and hum her hymns. He sped up Hill Road, cursing the tree and all strong life. She’d gone asleep and he roared near. He saw her glow like angels in the headlights’ wash.