HOOKED RUG
POEM BY
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Still life fashioned in fabric, variegated burgundy and currant frame grinning poppies, dark and bright like clotting blood, and wildly verdant leaves within a scalloped bed, oyster white.

The rug gives new life to tired textiles. The deep reds, granddaddy's worn out 'ol' BBQ shirts, the gentle white, an old horse blanket, the brights from remnants of jackets and skirts left over from rugs covering familiar floors.

Long strips, scissor-cut three-eighths inches wide, hooked and pulled in a rectangle of burlap backing, thirty-five by twenty-four.

Grandmother and her sisters Aunt Denna and Aunt Mattie drew the template in indigo ink, freehand on jute. Their ancient eyes saw the design before anyone else. Wrinkled hands dipped hooks like ladles into the burlap, latched wool, and pulled the loops again and again until the pattern emerged.

With occasional mumbles they passed strips back and forth, then only the rhythm of the hooks. They ran their fingers over the nap, checking for consistency in depth and tension. When they lay aside the hooks, they did not behold art, but found pleasure in the utility of a rug.

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