

work is love made visible

after working all day, at home or at the garment factory
or taking care of her mother or her grandchildren
after cooking dinner and cleaning up the kitchen
my granny would uncover her sewing machine
and stitch our family together

her love for me is
a green paisley dress with a matching purse
constructed when i was eight
and tucked into bed in the next room
the sewing machine humming into my dreams
her love for me is a 1970's high fashion three piece suit:
bellbottom pants, vest, blazer with broad lapels
made of faux suede patchwork in orange and brown

even now, i can recite every
article of granny's handiwork,
proclaim the delight of something made just for me
sing of the alchemy of love and labor,
testify that after working all day, day after day,
my granny would sit at her sewing machine
and attire me in vestments of love

jeanetta calhoun mish 2007