

Grandma Ling

Amy Ling

If you dig that hole deep enough,
you'll reach China, they used to tell me,
a child in a back yard in Pennsylvania.
Not strong enough to dig that hole,
I waited twenty years,
then sailed back, half way around the world.

In Taiwan I first met Grandma.
Before she came to view, I heard
her slippered feet softly measure
the tatami floor with even step;
the aqua paper-covered door slid open
and there I faced
my five foot height, sturdy legs and feet,
square forehead, high cheeks and wide-set eyes;
my image stood before me,
acted on by fifty years.

She smiled, stretched her arms
to take to heart the eldest daughter
of her youngest son a quarter century away.
She spoke a tongue I knew no word of,
and I was sad I could not understand,
but I could hug her.

<http://www.nexuslearning.net/books/holt-eol2/collection%202/grandmaling.htm>