

*My Lady by Bernadette Rule*

The first time Mom required my help to bathe  
I was worried she might feel ashamed.  
She'd always held her privacy so dear,  
maintained it raising her six kids right here:  
one bathroom, just two bedrooms in the place --  
its few square feet a measure, now, of grace.

I helped her take her clothes off, bathrobe first,  
until she stood there naked as at birth.  
A pear-shaped bottom, tiny sleeping breasts,  
a wisp of hair as white as all the rest,  
& still the elegance I'd always known,  
a self-containment that was all her own.

A maid-in-waiting, I offered her my hand  
then carried out each calm & cool command.

