

**Age**

Silas Marner with his golden stash  
has nothing on us with our stockpile of stories

useful as insulation against the coldness of youth,  
this frittata of years studded with the momentous

and the miniscule, the almost but not-quite-  
forgotten gem. To have seen the queen

without meaning to, to recall the indelible  
green of the hat and dress she wore

as she waved to the crowd with their noses  
pressed up to the palace gates.

The thrill of dialing one's mother in California  
from a Bayswater hotel room long before cell phones

to announce her daughter had happened  
upon a royal sighting,

the answering glee that trilled transatlantically  
as she sank into a chair,

talking to London for God's sake,  
holding half a pearl in her hand

while across the ocean of her mind's eye  
the other half glowed in mine.

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Barbara Ford. 'Age'.  
*Transnational Literature* Vol. 6 no. 1, November 2013.  
<http://fhrc.flinders.edu.au/transnational/home.html>