

Three Women in Church

Two teenage girls sit side by side.
Behind them, an older woman,
Hands age-spotted and wrinkled,
Slowly smooths the long soft hair of one girl.
Long-fingered slow caresses.
The girl rests her head on her friend's sweated shoulder.
The older woman strokes the finely intertwined hair.
Soon she has braided the strands of the girls' hair
Together;
Wrapped around and around, in and out, tightly fitted.
All in the brightly-lit, hardwood-pewed, stone-walled chapel.

—Ken Haubrock

This poem won first place in the BYU Studies 1999 poetry contest.