

MARIE TOZIER

She Loved Words

Grandmother told me a story. She said,
“*Dan and I,
When we were young,
And there was only your mom,
And Lucille, Glenn, and Elsie,
We would pack them over to Edith’s house.
Long time ago in Deering.
We’d play games and visit all night.
Finally when it got too late,
Edith would make something up.
She would say, ‘TTGH,’ and we had to guess
What it meant.*”

Grandmother played Scrabble.
We played on the kitchen table at her house,
At camp, on the plane. Later,
She learned to play online, dialing up
Her daughters who’d moved away.

One year, before Christmas,
Gram got sick. As she lay in the hospital bed,
Unconscious, we sang hymns
For her. Friends visited. Her remaining
Children returned. She woke up.
She smiled and laughed—
She said,
Time to Go Home.

Marie Tozier is an Inupiaq poet who lives in Nome, Alaska. Her book *Open the Dark* will be published by the Boreal Books imprint of Red Hen Press. Tozier’s poetry has appeared in *Yellow Medicine Review* and *Cirque* and is forthcoming in the *Alaska Quarterly Review*. She is a graduate of the University of Alaska, Anchorage, low-residency MFA. Tozier and her husband share their home with seven children and three huskies.

BRUCE POLLOCK

Asea, 2016
acrylic on linen, 60 x 78 in.



COURTESY THE ARTIST