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## **Decision**

Edith White

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Edith White / Decision

Hands in sudsy water  
I bathe fragile cups with care:  
Each gold-rimmed china shell,  
Rinsed and set to drain.  
For fifty years or so they have graced  
My cupboard shelves.  
Still I feel they really are  
My mother's English Bone.

She loved to greet the twilight  
With a friendly cup of tea,  
Not bags and water but  
A fragrant brew of leaves  
Steeped in a silver pot.  
She passed each guest the tray  
With a pitcher of foaming cream,  
Tongs for sugar lumps.

They sat to share their friendship  
With talk that warms—  
Filtered through tea leaves,  
Shaping the world to cozy.

Aunt Bertha, pince-nez on her nose,  
Fingered her black neck ribbon  
And stated her views precisely  
As she nibbled scones with her tea.  
Grandmother's fluttering hands  
Patted her fly-away hair;  
She would shake her head and murmur  
At the modern world's oddity.

Alone I am left to recall  
The sound of their chatter and laughter,  
Faint echoes of times past.  
My memory begins to dim.  
It is time I made the decision—  
I must pack the china in tissue  
For my granddaughter now.