

VINCE BAUTERS

JADE

Before my grandmother died
she wanted to be touched.

Petted.

A hand on her forehead.
Four fingers on her cheek.

Even the nurses helped,
rubbing her wrist with their thumbs

in circles. She wanted her body
to be tactile. Touchable

like a piece of jewelry.
A stone of jade.

Meant to be oiled by skin,
fingers and palms.

Cloudy with grease.

As if, only the things that are touched can be beautiful.

And quietly, using our fingers, everything was reversed.