

Great-Aunt Alice

How Dad hated you
challenging me
to be
a missionary, tales
of Yankee gunboats
down the Yangtze river, you
a legend in the family, he
a lowly in-law
staying home.

And now you are one hundred,
in a coma,
broken hip. Your real
life
happened
in the China years,
ending there with your converts
who loved you more
than we ever could.

SPARLING MILLS