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## Three Poems by Nancy Scott

### My Mother's Headstone

On my last, long distance  
Christmas pilgrimage by phone,  
my oldest living  
aunt said my mother's headstone  
was "a little crooked" on the hilltop  
forty miles away. It worried  
her, though she excused it to settling  
ground. I laughed, sure  
that a hand from above had tilted  
the angel holding the Bible  
I had chosen as a hopeful  
bribe for my absence  
and for God's attention.  
My mother didn't dislike the stone.  
She just wanted us to know  
that being upright and straight,  
even though you might  
miraculously become  
an angel, was still  
boring.

### A Penny Saved

She gives you the penny  
with a heart-shaped  
hole cut in its center, never  
mistaken for easy charity or extra sales  
tax. But what to do with it--keep it  
in a deep pocket of a favorite coat,  
proclaim its odd luck  
on your desk,  
tell gamblers it might  
win Saturday Spin,  
or give it to someone  
who then might remember  
you? Only a penny  
valued by what is carved  
in or out.

### The Nature of Beyond

Without you, I have come to love sunrise,  
to crave its beginning embrace.  
You approve my choice,

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send the insistent feathered shadow.  
July's robin sings loudest  
on your birthday, insists  
I open the kitchen window  
to unconditioned cheer.

In August, the robin will stop  
singing, his leaving slower than yours,  
but I will learn how not  
to lose him as he soars  
toward October's husked  
light and I begin to write  
these thank-you notes.

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**Nancy Scott**, Easton PA, is an essayist and poet. Her over 550 bylines have appeared in magazines, literary journals, anthologies and newspapers, and as audio commentaries. Recent work has appeared in *Burnside Review*, *Contemporary Haibun Online*, *Thema*, *Whistling Fire*, and *Wordgathering*. Her third chapbook, co-authored with artist Maryann Riker, is entitled *The Nature of Beyond*.

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