

COUSIN INGRID ●

Madelyn Camrud

As if even the fact of her dying needs apology,
she smiles, same shameful smile
she smiled in life. Pink roses crocheted,

white afghan drapes her body, skeletal,
face yellow from liver cancer, pillowed.

A prayer request to bless this house hangs over her bed.
I suggest this woman's house, already blessed

for the order of its rooms, Norwegian-clean.
Don't know her sins and if I did, am sure

her nimble fingers somehow made them pretty.
This woman who could mend most anything,

about to slip from a dress worn too long—
soon to fall, and lie in a heap, seams

showing, a mess for everyone to see.