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### **The Divinatory Words**

A paterfamilias, after morning prayer,  
Ensconced himself in a chair  
On the balcony  
With his third daughter and her third child.

His sibyllic eye visualised  
The future writ on the forehead of the taciturn child  
And, with a smile, he said,  
"This child will rid you of all your ills."  
The woman kissed the child and hugged him tightly.

Forty years on,  
With two characters gone,  
The chuckle lingers still,  
The divinatory words echo,  
The kiss is still warm on the forehead,  
And, the tween stands motionless in the embrace of his mother.