

# AMERICAN LIFE IN POETRY

A FREE COLUMN FOR NEWSPAPERS BY TED KOOSER, POET LAUREATE OF THE UNITED STATES, 2004-2006  
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## American Life in Poetry: Column 270

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We are sometimes amazed by how well the visually impaired navigate the world, but like the rest of us, they have found a way to do what interests them. Here Jan Mordenski of Michigan describes her mother, absorbed in crocheting.

### Crochet

Even after darkness closed her eyes  
my mother could crochet.  
Her hands would walk the rows of wool  
turning, bending, to a woolen music.

The dye lots were registered in memory:  
appleskin, chocolate, porcelain pan,  
the stitches remembered like faded rhymes:  
pineapple, sunflower, window pane, shell.

Tied to our lives those past years  
by merely a soft colored yarn,  
she'd sit for hours, her dark lips  
moving as if reciting prayers,  
coaching the sighted hands.

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