

## Aunt Vera

by Glenda Barrett

On Thanksgiving day, after driving  
from Atlanta with a bad knee, Vera  
hobbled through the door carrying a dish  
of fresh turnip greens from her garden.  
As we sat down to the meal, no one  
seemed to enjoy it more than Vera.  
She laughed and talked and passed dishes  
laden with food. One time someone  
mentioned something about losing weight.  
Vera, comfortable with her robust size  
replied, *Every single time in my life  
I went on a diet and lost weight I got sick,  
so I just decided to eat what I want.*  
As Vera neared eighty, I heard bits and pieces  
from Momma about her. *The doctor says,  
Vera's got congestive heart trouble,  
and diabetes.* The next time Vera visited,  
I noticed she'd lost about fifty pounds.  
*My doctor's put me on a diet,* she said.  
I applauded her progress. Months later,  
I received a call from Momma one morning,  
*Glenda, I've got to tell you something,  
Vera passed away peacefully this morning.*  
She was holding a cup of black coffee.