

Legacies

her grandmother called her from the playground

“yes, ma’am”

“i want chu to learn how to make rolls,” said the old
woman proudly

but the little girl didn’t want
to learn how because she knew
even if she couldn’t say it that

that would mean when the old one died she would be less
dependent on her spirit so
she said

“i don’t want to know how to make no rolls”

with her lips poked out
and the old woman wiped her hands on
her apron saying “lord
these children”

and neither of them ever
said what they meant
and i guess nobody ever does

Nikki Giovanni