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The Tang of Nasturtiums



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The Tang of Nasturtiums

on my tongue
the tang of nasturtiums—
the memory
of a brief affair
surfaces in my salad

in my closet
clothes for all occasions
yet the years
it took to be comfortable
in my own skin

spring fever—
the sap in the maple
is ready to tap
and you, love
are looking younger

in the soft
tones of his voice
fighting a fish—
the familiar sounds
of a seduction

this moment
between heaven and earth
in full bloom
our red camellia bush
and the white wolf moon

this beach glass
scoured a cloudy blue
so like your eyes
fading and emptying
to a relentless tide

morning sun
dances over your gift
of greengage plums
even at times of grieving
little flickers of joy

in this tin box
of unmatched buttons
one baby tooth—
her lifelong attachment
for things detached

even the dog
has developed a limp . . .
together, we walk
the cracked pavement
of October dusk

deadheading
the herb garden . . .
our anniversary
scented with basil and
lemon-thyme kisses

a light rain
upon leaf mulch—
an old grief
mingles with the scent
of late autumn

a bitter winter . . .
what would I do without
your pinch of salt
and my pinch of sugar
over morning porridge

a glass vase filled
with out-of-season tulips
oh, how we tried
to force-feed spring
into her winter decline

at life's end
you left us spare keys
with nothing to open
unmatched buttons
with nothing to close

a requiem
for she who loved apricot—
the color, the bloom
and the way the fruit
clung lightly to the stone

all that's left
of the old homestead . . .
a foundation
filled with flax, larkspur
and prairie grasses

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“a glass vase filled” received a Distinctive Scribblings Award, *Eucalypt* 8, 2010

“a requiem” won Second Prize in The Saigyo Awards for Tanka 2010

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