

Picking Strawberries

by Agnes Ezra Arabella

Underneath the fence
she picked strawberries
They were nickle sized
and some were red,
some were green
and some with a little
of both/
in between
They came up from the ground in little patches
and sweetness could be smelled on the wind
As the cloud cover came she
picked a bucket full until
it began to rain
"Oh sweet strawberries
where shall I go?
Oh sweet strawberries
What shall I do?
Now that my day is through"
and the wire has been tripped too many times

Across the street there was
a lilac bush
With that lilac smell so pungently rich
she reached to cut 3 pretty
stems of lilac sweetness
like the plumes of a peacock
they danced on the wind
one stem for the kitchen table
one stem for next to the bed
one stem for the desk where she kept her gun
filled with lead
She looked up and wondered

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would the clouds come again?
as the cloud cover came in
she placed the 3 lilacs in a
vase full
before it began to rain
"Oh pretty lilacs,
Where shall I go?
Oh pretty lilacs
What shall I do?
Now that my day is through"
and the wire has been tripped too many times

Beyond the railroad tracks
There was a sapling tree
with a pine like scent
so tree like bent
On top there was
a Blue Jay nest
She looked up and saw 3 feathers
floating to the ground
as the mother left
3 feathers to place in one
urn
She was so happy she found
She looked up and wondered
was the rain going to come around?
As the cloud cover came through
She put the feathers away
before it began to rain
"Oh soft feather's
Where shall I go?
Oh soft feather's
What shall I do?
Now that the day is through
And the wire has been tripped too many times

There were plumes of pure blue to blow
her wishes on
She made one wish
Then went inside

She put her strawberries
away in the refrigerator
She smelled her lilacs like perfume
And placed them in 3 vases
one for April, one for May and one for June
She put the 3 feathers on top of
the small wooden urn
with her father's ashes
poured her water, brushed her teeth
and tucked herself into bed
Pulled up her covers with the cotton thread
And opened a flower shaped box
yellow
dripped with silver
foiled with gold
like Goldilocks
and poured 3 pills like little seeds
into her hand
imagining they floated like the dandelions
on the wind
3 pills
white
blue oblong
and round
One pill for the nerves,
and all the crooked verbs
one pill for the voices
A flourish of curses
And one pill for the dread
A sickness of the head

Then she said her prayers
"Sweet Mother Mary"
and went to bed.

