

# Another Eden

## POETRY

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### ANOTHER EDEN

I met my grandmother's God in her garden. He was plucking  
cherry tomatoes from the bush, mangling them  
with His teeth. I said, *God, those are not your tomatoes.* And God  
nodded, tomato seeds caught in His beard. I said,  
*God, what are you doing in my grandmother's garden  
anyway?* He crushed the tomatoes over the mouth  
of a chalice, communion wine dripping where the juice  
should be, and I said, *God, I am not getting drunk  
with you at 10:45am in my grandmother's garden.*  
I met my grandmother's God in her garden and He offered  
me wine and looked puzzled when I wouldn't drink it. I wonder  
what would happen if I encountered God in a back alley  
on a dark night instead of here in the sun,  
if I offered Him a joint. My grandmother got high, sucking  
on the morphine my mother administered to her  
through a plastic syringe. That was her first substance  
since my brother saw the smoke while she pushed him  
in his stroller. My grandmother had not had a drink  
in thirty years. And here was God in her garden,  
holding out a glass of consecrated  
grape juice. I wanted to say, *God, this garden  
is not yours!* I wanted to remind Him what happened  
the last time He messed around with gardens.  
When my grandmother stopped breathing at 10:45am  
on a Tuesday I wanted to say, *God, my grandmother  
is not yours!* I wanted to remind Him that *He* belonged to *her*.  
Looming over my grandmother's garden, God asked me  
how it was so wild, yet somehow tamer than His own.  
I replied, *God, aren't you supposed to know  
everything?* And God shrugged. I showed God  
how we pull out the weeds. How to lift  
the frail new tomato branches onto the metal trellis.  
To use the mist setting when watering the young  
plants, and how much to drench the earth. I will not let God  
flood my grandmother's garden. I will not let someone  
else's God wash away my only keepsake. I showed God  
how we make life come up from the soil. When God set down  
His trowel, the tomatoes went limp,

rotten. The ground beneath my feet turned  
to shapeless mud. I asked Him, *God,*  
*what are you transforming her into?* I asked,  
*God, are you transforming everything?* And God then  
was gone, a trick of the light, not a trace of holiness,  
not one broken stem where He had stood. ■