

Grief

Margot Schilpp

In the kitchen, the heads of lettuce are lonely.
They wait
in the dark for your hands to press against their ears.

The corn unzips
its silk, a striptease with tassels just for you.
You never use

the seasoned iron skillet that came from your mother,
never twist
the stove's knobs anymore. In your kitchen, flames

are only ghosts
of flames, cold shapes shivering in echo or pantomime.
Against the drain,

the sink's sponge is a hard, green oblong, and
a residue
of bubbles climbs the stainless steel. In your kitchen,

no one spreads
out dough with the rolling pin, no one drops cookies
on a sheet.

No measuring spoons rattle. All the spices stay
in their own
quaint jars, quiet and sealed. The teakettle's whistle is

a memory
ramping up in the humid air. In your kitchen the potholders
and placemats

and aprons and dishrags sit limp. The dip tray stays
in the cupboard.
The cutting board could just as well have stayed a tree.

