

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Eileen Murphy: Two Poems

Mish (Eileen) Murphy · Wednesday, August 12th, 2020

### I Wish

Grandma,  
I wish  
we could sit down  
at your Formica table  
in your kitchen in Tampa  
and eat grapes  
and drink Cokes from the bottle  
to keep cool.

You always slipped me  
a few bucks  
because you knew  
money escaped me,

but you didn't mind  
the way I was.

I wish I could take you shopping.  
I'd buy you  
a pair of red shoes.

You always liked shoes.

I wish I could  
wrap you  
into a piece of bread  
and carry you in my purse

and when I needed you,  
I'd pull off a piece

and let you  
dissolve

on my tongue.

\*

## Catnip

*(label on a jar on top of my refrigerator)*

One spring my fiancé  
set up our herb garden.  
At first, he took it seriously.  
We had parsley, sage, rosemary, and thyme,  
just like Simon and Garfunkel,  
and ginger, mint, dill, and catnip, besides.

But he didn't water,  
didn't weed.  
(He says he's not *a weeder*.)

It's hot here in Florida.  
It's terrible hot.  
He put up  
this shade contraption,  
wooden slats,  
a kind of jail for herbs.

Soon they started falling down,  
the slats.  
And the herbs.

The thyme soon ran out of time.  
Poor little dill  
keeled over  
like wilted asparagus stalks.  
Rosemary and sage  
never grew enough  
to save.

My fiancé loved the mint.  
Wanted to know  
the recipe  
for mint juleps.  
And did we have  
proper cups.

Sorry, I'm not up to polishing  
my silver julep cups these days.  
We'll use plastic.

Mint don't mind.  
Mint's a weed.

All he had to do  
was buy a ginger root  
from the organic food store  
and stick it in the ground.

His first ginger crop  
tasted like horseradish.  
He couldn't be  
bothered  
to stick  
any more ginger roots  
in the ground.

Goodbye, ginger.

Then it was goodbye, fiancé,  
  
and I thought the herb garden  
was finished  
when the weeds took over.

But then there's catnip,  
a hardy plant.

Catnip's a beacon.

One by one,  
the feral cats in our rural neighborhood  
strut around and around  
the abandoned herb garden  
on hot summer nights.

They perch  
on a shade-slat amid the weeds  
and begin  
to yowl.

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