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The poetry of Darrell Petska

Picker and Poet

Sun's last blister spent,
a twi-lit pickup fleeing acres of asparagus,
windows blinking at the migrant center—

dear artisans of our fields, forgive my trespass
as you tend your row-weary feet,
hard-working toes pleading for balm,

sleep's balm, upon eyes sun-dimmed and gritty,
sleep to resuscitate muscle and sinew,
fingers that curl through long use
into rough contours of palm now
simmering to night's cool sheet of air,

your bodies' lengths consigned to company cots
directing productive rest mindless of all labor,
dreamful of arms distant and sweet.

But our nights intersect: in these deep fields
we labor on, ever watchful
where to plant our feet,
what our bent fingers ought reap,
how far to row's end before turning to the next—

On 99 southbound, shadowed trucks rumble,
laden with green thoughts of home.
Night's dark work progresses.

The Trail of Flowers

Flower children
borne by a new age
of rifles stemmed with love
and walls psychedelic-friendly—
until our stars tarnished,
clanking from the sky,
and dictionaries grew two minds.
Now moss caps our heads
and streets seldom know us.
We tried to be loyal,
following the trail of flowers,
though rifles we fronted turned
devious and walls shed their colors.
The mirror we shared has clouded,
our eyes reaching past each other
toward blooms we're loathe to share.
We blame the clocks, atmospheric
disruption, devils in our machines
as wounded cities writhe
and gutters choke with dreams.
Billboards demean our age
for what we did not accomplish.
We kept to the trail till the end fell away.
Now time runs late for everyone,
so few arisen to bridge that leap
toward abiding fields of harmony and love.