

POTATOES AROUND THE ROAST

How many times a day do I feel like crying
when I think
of my mother's
good food?

Just this afternoon,
putting a chunk of salmon in the sink to thaw
I looked up, and it was her "potatoes around the roast"
that came back to me.

Earthy, golden nubbins, caramelized and crackling
in the rich, bubbling fat of the meat.
She didn't explain or wait
for praise. Just turned
to her work, grabbed two stained potholders
and pulled from the oven
our evening meal.

Roast and potatoes suggest winter.
The kitchen windows dark, holding
the cold at bay. About 6 o'clock

and the thin day
would be nearly two hours deep
into darkness—the night's chill
slithering its way across the lawn.

And here she was, calmly
arranging on the kitchen counter
a teak bowl filled with bright ruffles of lettuce,
the meat pierced with garlic, a perfect pink at the center, and of
course
the potatoes
made glorious by the context
she gave them. All of it

perfectly ready
at the same time, the way nothing
ever happens
anymore.

—Tina Blade

