

## Grandpa's Garden

Hidden by leaves  
hugging the ground  
far beneath even my low, preschooler's knees,  
bold red fruit—  
unknown, unseen, untasted—  
beckoned without a word

till my grandfather  
brought us over to stoop  
and sweep aside the beaded leaves  
with the backs of our hands  
to sight and seize, this time,

strawberries.

Like the tomatoes  
(and cherry tomatoes  
which my brothers had already yielded to me,  
since I, with my freckles and beacon of hair,  
was also the smallest red globule around)  
they moistened our throats  
and slobbered our chins  
suddenly, lusciously, scrumptiously,  
with a heavenly sweetness  
unlike earthy tomatoes,  
for they were,  
after all,  
strawberries  
best picked and savored  
after a rainy spell,  
Grandpa, with his accent, taught us.

—James B. Nicola



Image Info