

SELECTED POEM

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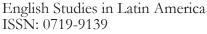
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Selected Poem

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'How do you

Measure grief?'

I ask my grandmother, as we sit beneath the skythe pink peeling away the orange in a twilight daze.



I feel it in my bonesa struggle of memory against patches of skin always kept alive-The heart is a private clock, and the nose knows what is to come.'



It's been a year and a half since mamma was taken away, and a half since she withered into the ground.

I have measured this grief against my body-

A heart beat split into two.

The number of days since these hands served you food-

The number of days since these fingers strummed through your hair-

The number of days since these eyes

saw your clothes flutter in the wind-

The number of days since this nose

smelt the assault of dettol against your skin-

The number of days since these ears

heard you haggle with the vendor-

The number of days since

our last meal together went cold-

And the number of days since these feet

went colder.'



Grief is a measureof the presence of the absence,
'the could nots against the would havesan act of living, loving, and rememberingto not forget that Demeter's grief for Persephone
was the absence of summer.'



And so it sitswith a homogenous uneasea force, a presence
invisible
the loss of a mother and a daughter between
usGrandmother and I,
its sorrow spun to our bones.