

Steve Cartwright

My First Tomato



My first tomato's turning slowly, very very slowly
From a hard and shiny green through orange, and then finally to soft and plummy red
I placed it with the others in the fruit bowl, so bananas can impart their ripeness to them all
And now my first tomato's gently blushing, casting off its hard and adolescent green
And pulling on it's adult coat of firey red
It's been a sort of miracle to me to watch them grow
The plants I had were puny, blight lay on their bottom leaves
Perhaps I should have thrown them out
Brought others in
But I persevered, placed them in a sunny spot in our backyard upon the slabs
And then I worried that the kids might poke their eyes out on the canes and thought of placing plant
pots upside down upon the canes to counter this
But
Being as I am
Obsessive, often thinking of the worst
I moved them to a grow bag by the shed

Not so much sun but my mad mind's more settled now
And so they stand, tied to their canes all in a line beneath the snowing blossom of the Russian vine
And in this new position find it hard to ripen

But
So very very slowly
They have made me these few hard and green tomatoes
From the magic of the elementals
And now the poor old mother plants are sagging
Their green has left
An aging yellow courses through their drooping fronds
They tumble over now their work is done
Hanging on the rigging of the canes up by the shed
Tomorrow I shall pull them up
But still the fruit of their now shrivelled limbs
Is glistening in the fruit bowl in the lounge
And each is gently turning orange through to plummy red