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## Cooking Supper while My Sister Dies

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*Cooking Supper While My Sister Dies*

She takes her last meal of sugar water and oblivion,  
the needle keen as a knife, a double-edged bridge

she must cross into the Unsayable. *Wait*, I say, *wait*—  
but she will not, nor can I go with her, delay

in each grain of rice, exile in the onions I chop so fine  
I am word blind, my face wet with the rain

that was her grief, and mine, that we did not love  
each other long enough. Black olives, then zucchini

diced, swept into a pan from the wooden board,  
a heave offering to the wine dark sea.

And I must . . . I can only . . . I am left with . . .  
this tomato, sun-ripened and taut, tinged green

at the pock where it let go of the vine. Into hinged  
wedges I cut it slowly. Slowly. Wanting

her to be like a flower that opens into a summer night  
of stars, breath by breath.

Wondering, *Is it here? Is it yet? Is it now?*