
POETRY | SPRING 2018

At the Green Burial Informational Luncheon

By Ingrid Andersson

Would I lay my mother's spent stem and flower body
in my bed, intimate with the marriage of love and grief?

Or would I lay her on the kitchen table (pulling out an extra leaf)
where we eat? What will I do with my mother's body when she is dead?

I glance at the petal-folds of her painter's face, looking forward
in the folding chair beside me, then at the smooth-faced funeral-sellers

in front of us, who seem nice enough, thinking us promising customers.
Her only wish, my mother says, is to be laid in dirt less than four feet deep

so that hungry microbes may eat. Why does it have to be so complicated,
so much paperwork for the State, rules of custody, transportation,

why such fuss? No question, I would prefer to lay her at the foot
of the black walnut in my yard, where the strong-willed

goldenrod, tiger lilies and old world lilacs bloom. I'd want to go there,
evenings, recount the news, and how death's ravages render

feasts of color, pollen, and in spring, the most beloved perfume.

Ingrid Andersson is a full-time midwife and poet in Madison, WI. She is completing her first collection of poetry, entitled, *Down the Female Ages*. Her writing has appeared in *The Progressive* magazine, *About Place* journal, *Midwest Review* and *Wisconsin Poets' Calendar*.

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