The Sun Visits a Farmers’ Market in Northern California

Their voices weaving purple shadows, children are running around the traffic barriers. Strawberries, loose & in boxes, a market-stall of tulips bundled & tipped by fire, local artichokes stacked two-for-a-dollar, Solano Avenue is closed below San Pablo.

& you, my exclamation point, my little grief, let’s you & me stroll among the produce where tastes of supper are sold for the mere tap-tap & pause of our passing. Look: the late sun has slipped under us & grasped then floated out

our shadows, like throw-rugs shook become flags or undone bandages. Soon enough, my black leaves, night-softened underfoot, our passage will go quiet, quiet as the great, travelling clouds. So much before us, so much time before us & ours

so little, so afflicted, but the Renaissance will keep us alive: late strawberries overflowing their paper cartons, blunt loaves glowing a soft bronze, the crumpled bibs of lettuce & purple kale, the faces of the vendors & of the crowd. The sun’s insistent hands are seeking each bleak thing.

by Christina Hutchins