

'The Suede Shoes'

Victoria Bennett

No good news from now
the doctor told us.
The nurse cried.
You did not.

I spend my days on the telephone,
searching for certainties:
names, dates, results,
chasing facts like dandelion wisps,
running out of time.

Sometimes, we talk about death.
Mostly, we talk about hospitals.
Bit by bit, their language claims us.

Meanwhile, the hen scratches
around the tree and the bees
collect nectar from a creeping vine.
The sun finally shines.

This is our in-between
living-and-dying time.

Why bother planting that seed?
Why turn the beds
for a summer that will never come?
Why bother buying the pretty suede shoes?

We choose the shoes because
we can still find joy in a step.
We plant the seed because
we still love the way
it insists itself into life.

We turn the beds because
there will always be a summer,
even after you are gone.

Soon, we shall have only echoes
but for now, we drink tea
and watch the clouds move,

watch the light pass
between the storm

and there is still good news.