

The Moccasin Gardens

At four winters Nohkom
gave me rhubarb seeds.
I would dribble slough water
from daily trips with my pails.

One day a sprout poked its head.
I tore it out
to show my mother.
Nothing else ventured after.

With shovel and spade
my parents and siblings
plowed the unbroken soil.
We planted potatoes.
For years we pulled the weeds
for this winter harvest.

My husband built a mandala
garden beds surrounded with a fence
to match the prairie's rolling hill.
Sitting on a bench
I talked to the seeds.
On another bench
among the wild vegetation
I talk to the lake.
And in the aspens
sip tea
branches shading
the blistering heat.

My stained pants,
boots filled with chaff,
I remember my aunt
who taught me to eat
dirt.

One day I will nurture a seed
to take root to this garden scape.

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Parliamentary Poet Laureate**