

# Navel

*Anita Tanner*

I drive by a red farmhouse  
in the setting sun. Orange morning  
darts through rippled glass.  
High-glossed linoleum  
wears into mottled color. Oranges  
studded with cloves perfume buffet drawers.

I imagine Gram's baptism  
in the irrigation ditch  
way out back,  
follow the road that turns  
like a cord until the white church  
appears.

There old men utter oracles  
about the Holy Ghost,  
about the body and blood  
of sacrament  
and how Gawwd rules  
in our lives.

I remember the navel oranges  
at Christmas time,  
how I turned each one before eating  
to the depression like a navel  
on the underside and imagined  
the undeveloped fruit.

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*ANITA TANNER has a perpetual interest in poetry and literature, resides in Cortez, Colorado, with her husband and six children, and serves in her Stake Women Organization.*

The road threads from the church  
to the blue school  
that seemed an orphanage.  
Oddly, here I learned to pray  
against the taunts and whims of peers.  
against the measuring, falling short,

against devils  
and souls in hell  
that could be prayed out,  
souls severed from wholeness,  
left waiting  
for a chance connection.

Just as the sun sets, I pass by  
the road, a spindle I revolve on.  
I roll the window,  
reach outside the car,  
lay my palm  
against the sun's ghost.