

THE  
SPOON  
RIVER Poetry Review

*Carol Hunter-Clarke*

Tropical Petal

A year after your death,  
your things come from the cold Mother  
country. I uncork your memories  
sealed in barrels winged from her frost,  
decades of foreign fragrance confined  
in the corner of my room,  
mountains of yarn, stuffed toys, knits,  
doilies delicate as spider webs,  
remnants of you stretch across my bed.

I reshape your patterns,  
recollect your rheumatic limbs, fighting fatigue,  
(you who bloomed so in the sunshine)  
I see you stone-faced angel at double-deckered stops,  
remember the woman who pissed  
in her boots because it was too cold to be decent  
(it's good for the leather too).

Today I do the last rites,  
brighten your British beiges and muted greens,  
inter you in mountain spices,  
fold your memories like sheets  
for the grandbabies

I want to plant some fever-grass  
right at your head, tropical petal,  
but instead I resurrect your navel-string,  
replant it with this coconut tree.