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Yvonne Higgins Leach

I Wasn't Looking for a Metaphor

I was looking for the right wave
to wash the sand from my hands.

So many waves laddering across the shoreline
in predictable time, yet my hands remained rough.

Then a wave arrived in a coherent plunge
that wiped them clean.

And I thought of you.
In the lip of the front porch frame,

your silhouette distinct in the lucid light,
your arms full of things whose smells

made no sense:
homemade brownies and fresh flowers.

When you tell me you hope it is okay to just drop by,
that hibernating exhaustion bucks my ribs.

I have gone several weeks without
a cautious conversation with someone

who pitied my loss, who chose only safe
words, unhurttable phrases.

But you, you stepped in, humbly,
placed your gifts on the entry table

and kept the air just the right
space between us.

Outside, the teeming moths made soft
bumping sounds against the light.

Inside, you bent toward me and,
wordless, gave me a hug.

You became a handful of light,
a blossoming, my wave.

Yvonne Higgins Leach has published work in *Cimarron Review*, *Reed Magazine*, *Windfall*, *Clare Literary Magazine*, *Wisconsin Review* and elsewhere, including the anthologies *Lilac City Folk Tales* and *Dear Cancer*