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Paula Appling

Breathless

How do I write
a poem
so succulent
my mouth waters and
my tongue doesn't want it to end;
so beautiful,
I lose myself to the sounds and images,
and I'm not here anymore, I'm there, wherever there is;
and so seductive
my breath
can't
come?

I begin with a wish,
an openness
and a yearning,
a whispered desire
to receive what is . . .

As the notion gentles its way home,
I consume it.
It devours.
I luxuriate,
revel in velvet language
that reveals itself in moments too short to catch;
delight in words slipping, teasing,
playing peek-a-boo
in the folds of my being.

How do I write
mouth-watering allusions
that someone, somewhere
can't get enough of?

Paula Appling's work has appeared in *The Road Not Taken*, *Toasted Cheese*, and the *South Carolina Bards Anthologies* of 2022, 2023, and 2024. She has also won monthly challenges run by the Poetry Society of South Carolina and the California State Poetry Society.