

Kitchen Fable

By Eleanor Ross Taylor

The fork lived with the knife
and found it hard — for years
took nicks and scratches,
not to mention cuts.

She who took tedium by the ears:
nonforthcoming pickles,
defiant stretched-out lettuce,
sauce-gooed particles.

He who came down whack.
His conversation, even, edged.

Lying beside him in the drawer
she formed a crazy patina.
The seasons stacked —
melons, succeeded by cured pork.

He dulled; he was a dull knife,
while she was, after all, a fork.

Notes:

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Eleanor Ross Taylor was born in Norwood, North Carolina, and graduated from Women's College, now the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, in 1942. While studying at Vanderbilt University, Caroline and Allen Tate introduced her to novelist Peter Taylor, whom she would marry in 1943. She was elected to the Fellowship of Southern Writers in 2009 and the Poetry Foundation's Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize in 2010 and lived for many years in Charlottesville, Virginia. Her poetry has been described as elegiac, lyric and feminine.

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