

Oranges

By Roisin Kelly

I'll choose for myself next time
who I'll reach out and take
as mine, in the way
I might stand at a fruit stall

having decided
to ignore the apples
the mangoes and the kiwis
but hold my hands above

a pile of oranges
as if to warm my skin
before a fire.
Not only have I chosen

oranges, but I'll also choose
which orange — I'll test
a few for firmness
scrape some rind off

with my fingernail
so that a citrus scent
will linger there all day.
I won't be happy

with the first one I pick
but will try different ones
until I know you. How
will I know you?

You'll feel warm
between my palms
and I'll cup you like
a handful of holy water.

A vision will come to me
of your exotic land: the sun
you swelled under
the tree you grew from.

A drift of white blossoms
from the orange tree
will settle in my hair
and I'll know.

This is how I will choose
you: by feeling you
smelling you, by slipping
you into my coat.

Maybe then I'll climb
the hill, look down
on the town we live in
with sunlight on my face

and a miniature sun
burning a hole in my pocket.
Thirsty, I'll suck the juice
from it. From you.

When I walk away
I'll leave behind a trail
of lamp-bright rind.

Source: *Poetry* (September 2015)