

Truth Serum

By Naomi Shihab Nye

We made it from the ground-up corn in the old back pasture.
Pinched a scent of night jasmine billowing off the fence,
popped it right in.
That frog song wanting nothing but echo?
We used that.
Stirred it widely. Noticed the clouds while stirring.
Called upon our ancient great aunts and their long slow eyes
of summer. Dropped in their names.
Added a mint leaf now and then
to hearten the broth. Added a note of cheer and worry.
Orange butterfly between the claps of thunder?
Perfect. And once we had it,
had smelled and tasted the fragrant syrup,
placing the pan on a back burner for keeping,
the sorrow lifted in small ways.
We boiled down the lies in another pan till they disappeared.
We washed that pan.

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