

I never wanted cabbage

by J N MacNeill

I never wanted cabbage on my plate,
except to fill a space, to be the veg,
but now — with butter, pepper — my re-educated palate
does enjoy its taste.

My father once grew smooth-leafed kale
in regimented rows. A stronger flavour than
a hard round cabbage, bitterness that cannot
be ignored. And yet it gave more pleasure.

Why is that? I'm far from understanding
how a cheese that has the pungency of athlete's foot
can be a luxury.

We hate the room that stinks of beer,
the pan in which were fried the fish we had for tea.
And so,
is there a chance you'll take to me?

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