

Natasha Sajé, from *Bend* (Tupelo, 2014)

Song of the Cook

I chant the pickled alewife, I wallow in surfeit

plums simmering magenta
culled & staining
a backdrop for intrigue

I excise hearts

I let edges be edges and
where would I be without my thin blade?

Somewhere a woman is washing her hands with wine
on her breath, and elsewhere garlic
heads tumble to a pink tiled floor

My fingers are forks, my tongue is a rose

herb-snip
meat-whack
root-chop

I turn silver spoons into rabbit stew
make quinces my thorny upholstery

O custard apple pudding of applied love
O cider wheedling its sugary tune

how else could the side of beef walk
with the sea urchin roe?

How else could I seize what I see and ride
my bird's-eye maple broom

into the night sky's steam?

