

**a little book of odes**

**by martha j. cinader**

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**Listen & Be Heard**

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## ode to blue angels

if you  
asked me “describe  
blue angels”  
i would say  
blue angels  
watch over us  
cry for  
sins we will  
soon commit  
feel pain  
when children suffer  
whisper words  
inspiring us to  
be better  
love all people

would never  
imagine in my  
wildest dreams  
that blue  
angels could be  
air planes  
screaming obscenities at  
blue skies

## ode to the dark morning

newborn  
babes  
wake  
before  
sunrise  
and

mothers

teachers  
radio  
personalities  
old  
people  
far

east

anticipation  
pulls  
us  
from  
our  
sleep

we

witness  
light  
diffuse  
night  
mystery  
into

day

we  
dread  
or  
hope  
or  
pray

for

## ode to cutting onions

every day  
i hear bad news

what i hear  
i feel

sometimes i feel angry  
sometimes i feel sorrowful

sometimes i feel powerless  
sometimes i feel

i am not doing enough

every day  
i cut onions

i cry every time

the tears stream  
the anger flows

the sorrow  
is plentiful

knowing that my blessings

are someone else's pain

then i give thanks  
for my dinner

and i eat  
to live

## ode to tomato soup

the sun was shining  
on the tomatoes  
in my backyard  
over by the fountain  
i built on top of  
my compost heap  
i picked them  
and put them  
in a clay bowl

Crystal made it  
last semester

with  
the last of the onions  
from the pots  
stems of  
thyme  
and that plant  
smells just like curry  
brought them into

my kitchen

simmer the onions and garlic  
saeda told me  
that's the secret

then add

the tomatoes

and salt

some spinach from

the farmers market

a spoonfull of rice

oops forgot the ginger

but it tastes good anyway

better than good

like

the last summer sun

shining in my belly

## ode to authority

most everyone

has the authority

to do

whatever they can get away with

there's a whole lot of people

getting away with a whole lot of shit

and a few people

getting away with

a whole lot more shit

and a couple people

getting away with

ten thousand

more times shit than that

like our  
President  
and Vice President

of the World  
Gas House Corporation

one of them always  
gets to keep their finger  
on the thermostat

they both must be cold blooded

cuz they keep it hot

all the time

i  
think

when they each wake up

in the morning

and look

in the mirror

they see

authority

written in the lines  
in their foreheads

by their founding fathers  
brothers  
cousins

the authority to contradict

themselves

the authority to arrest anyone

who is contradictory

i'd like to know  
how they get away with it

seems to me

authority

always winds up

being decided

by the most powerful punch

no matter what anyone

says

## ode to authority

i  
always  
rebelled  
against  
authority  
figures  
even  
if  
i  
knew  
a  
person  
who  
had  
the  
authority  
over  
me  
might  
be  
right  
about  
something  
or  
anything  
it  
did  
not  
matter  
what

mattered  
was  
that  
they  
had  
the  
authority  
to  
say  
what  
mattered  
but  
some  
people  
are  
authorities  
on  
a  
particular  
subject  
like  
how  
to  
fix  
my  
computer  
when  
i  
can  
not  
a  
time  
when

i  
am  
happy  
to  
be  
friends  
with  
an  
authority  
but  
things  
that  
can  
not  
break  
do  
not  
need  
fixing  
like  
poetry  
so  
who  
is  
the  
poetry  
authority  
the  
one  
who  
knows  
the  
most

poems  
the  
one  
who  
wrote  
the  
best  
poems  
the  
one  
who  
publishes  
poetry  
the  
one  
with  
the  
most  
money  
the  
one  
who  
yells  
the  
loudest  
or  
gives  
the  
best  
introduction  
i  
never  
wanted

to  
be  
an  
authority  
but  
i  
guess  
every  
time  
i  
make  
a  
choice  
i  
am  
one  
and  
sometimes  
i  
just  
decide  
shit  
when  
i'm  
tired  
or  
feeling  
bitchy  
my  
children  
force  
me  
to

be  
an  
authority  
when  
i  
would  
rather  
just  
read  
poetry  
it  
is  
lucky  
for  
me  
that  
every  
person  
is  
an  
authority  
figure  
and  
i  
am  
not  
the  
only  
one  
who  
has  
to  
go

around  
being  
an  
authority  
every  
day

## Ode to Touch

words fail

creation is a loud  
unintelligible sound  
accompanied by pain  
only the Touch of little lips to  
nipple  
slipping on  
a sweaty belly  
tiny hands grasping  
a finger  
can make the journey  
complete

words fail to speak

the love transferred  
by a mother's hug  
the brush of  
her lips  
sending away  
the dark shadows of  
a windy night  
the Touch of  
her warm hand on  
the bare skin of  
your brow

words create a need

to be engaged  
imply there is  
an outside  
that needs to  
be taken in  
and felt from  
the inside  
to make it real  
cuz if the words don't  
Touch you  
then they were  
never spoken

words are always reaching out

they push  
your buttons  
stroke the keyboard  
arrange themselves  
on the page so  
that you almost  
believe  
they are real  
and you even  
say them aloud to  
reassure yourself that  
they are  
real

you could talk until sunrise

and not learn  
the volumes

about a man that  
you learn from  
his handshake  
the first time  
he kisses you  
your tongues  
Touch together  
a new  
soundless language  
they could never speak  
each  
alone

words use our emotions

to try to get to us  
make an angry fuss  
for attention  
make declarations  
to create drama  
make promises to  
be broken  
try to be final  
but all that is erased  
by a grasping  
of hands  
Touch of a  
bear hug  
that says  
everything is  
OK  
now

## Ode to Touch

Touch is  
blind  
to color  
it has  
it's own  
prejudice  
preferring  
a caress  
to a cold hard  
slap  
reveals  
trembling  
belies words  
that deny  
vulnerability

Touch  
reminds us  
we are always  
in the here  
and now  
can't be  
anywhere  
else  
but  
if  
we  
close  
our  
eyes

we  
can  
get  
lost  
in an embrace  
that erases  
borders  
between  
what we are  
and what we are not  
  
even stops the clock.

I could touch  
You  
without moving  
no sweat or  
heave or  
sigh  
and know  
the river in  
your arteries  
know  
the fire  
in your gut  
no  
need to ask  
if i'm coming  
or going  
because i remember  
when  
i was yellow  
and you were red

i was a man  
and you were a woman

maybe I could even  
learn  
to  
Touch

You

with  
only  
my  
eyes

but i don't want to.

## ode to an ode

an ode  
is  
wonder  
full

a song  
of praise  
to raise

a voice

for  
any  
one  
or  
any

thing

to  
make

an eternally

ripe

tomato

with words

in a world

where

tomatoes

get eaten

or rot

on the vine

to remember

a smile

a handshake

regenerate

a fleeting moment

forever

to affirm

the existence of

the netherworld of

the heart

let it speak

words of love

to whatever it wishes

to celebrate

at the people's

banquet

the feast of

life

in

every

detail.