**A Perfect Cup of Tea – Sharon Frayne**

There’s a perfect way to do it.

She said,

To the young girl with the charcoal eyes and midnight hair.

And you must learn the secret.

Start with the pot…

Bone china is best.

Rinse it out.

Pour cold, cold water

into the kettle

Heat to a boil, a rolling boil. Wait until it boils.

Place the teabags in the china pot.

One bag for two cups

No more, no less.

She held up her fingers to clarify.

Then, pour the boiling water over the tea…

And cover. Now wait.

Three to five minutes, if you mark the time.

She tapped her watch.

Mark the time, she said.

And pour.

Perhaps milk – not cream.

Perhaps sugar – not honey.

Remember, she said,

The fine china cup.

The flowered one with the fine gold rim.

The young girl with the charcoal eyes and midnight hair

Thought, she’s old,

That’s a lot of work.

Said, “Thank you.”

“I’d like to use the Kuerig.”

**It was just an old car, he said. – Sharon Frayne**

We sold you.

Not to someone who would love you

As I did

Not to a student

Nervous and excited

Not to a family

Needing more space

But to a stranger

In a parking lot

At night under the glowing lights of a bank

Into a shipping container

Across the ocean

To unknown lands and an unknown future

What cargo do you carry

In your hidden inner spaces

Where are you now,

My beloved RAV 4?

**The Flowers in My Garden – Sharon Frayne**

In the beginning.

The white waiting time of Winter.

The promise that lies hidden,

buried beneath a crystal blanket.

Sleeping, resting, waiting, hoping…

Come cold cover of snow!

Then watching, always watching for the signs.

The blue breath of Spring

tentative stirring begin

pale green shoots,

Struggling through the hard ground.

Blessed nourishment from the sky

Come drenching down drizzle of rain!

Early arrivals, shy at first

Dancing daffodils, crocus, forsythia, hyacinths,

Scilla, tulips, magnolia, primrose and lily of the valley

Each one more confident

Parading down the fashion runway of my garden

Then, suddenly it is here.

Bathing in the golden glow of Summer

Come sizzling season of sun!

Hot and strong. Crowding and jostling for space.

Full glory, taking their turn

Dazzling one by one

They turn on the stage and face the sun

Iris, rose, lily, daisy, salvia, aster, lupines

Delphinium, phlox, poppy,

Multiply, spread, sprawl until the ground is covered

Then drop their petals, and withdraw.

The fourth act begins with the red curtain of Fall

Wind turns cool

Birds, butterflies, bees leave the performance hall

In the garden and begin to move on

to stages beyond

Encore! Encore!

The final performers take the stage

mums, dahlias, daisies, monkshood

One last blaze of song and dance.

And then…

The nights are long and days are cold

Flowers are gone and the leaves brown

Turning limp and litter the ground

The caretaker rakes away the remnants

And closes the door.

While the pattern of life once more

Begins.

Sleeping, resting, waiting, hoping

For the flowers in my garden.