

Citrus Promise
by Marie Giardina

Just a brief walk in from the farm to hot, cooked lunch daily and before his nap, my father, with a sweep of his Case, produced one continuous orange curl with that escaping essence –then the most delicious flesh.

My earliest citrus remembrances -- my Italian grandmother broiling meat with parsley, garlic, and lemons. My Uncle Charlie adored this dish. My mother relied on it so much that citrus courses in my marrow.

And, she made pies, too. Using a box mix, she'd declare that just a squeeze of one real lemon makes all the difference, and it does.

What could compete with grapefruit, chilled by cold snaps, sweetened only by the gentle preparation of the loving dad who grew it, fetched it, peeled it, cut it, and served it up as breakfast fruit?

I miss them even more -- my father, my Italian grandmother, my Uncle Charlie, -- since my mother is with them.

But just outside my window, the lemon blooms...
my bones, my being, ache, anticipate
this citrus promise.