

Onions

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I wonder how many more red onions will come out of your garden
now that you're dead.

I peeled the last one tearfully, unwrapped pieces of thin-flaked skin
and washed the remaining earth away.

You might have touched that dirt.

Maybe your sweat dripped down the corner of your cheek, through
your beard as you dug and planted.

This was how you reclaimed the world. This was how you communi-
cated with the God who left you waiting in the woods for seven
days with no answers—no signs.

This was what you did.

This is what you created—the onion we sliced into hair-thin lines
sautéed for cranberry chutney on the Thanksgiving Day table.

I feel like I just bit into your cheek.

These are the onions you planted while you were rotting and praying
in your garden.

The onion tastes sweet—is this what you prayed for—sweet onions
for a chutney?