She Feeds Me Now
SUSAN JOHNSON

I read cookbooks as if they were ancient texts, the life of grandmother's grandmother translated into recipes for blueberry buckle in some parts called grunt, crisp, slump, crumble, cobbler. Berries, stone fruit, orchard drops, warm, cold, sweet, tart, it fed you. And she fed you: finnan haddie, soused mackerel, parsnip pudding, hodge podge, kippers, vinegar pie. And she feeds me now, this language, this searching through tea stained pages. What to make of all this making? You cook what you have, ingest what you can. First thing you do is boil a pot of water. That's how all good meals begin. I mean memories. I mean poems.