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## Nightshade Nights

Loren Mixon

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and meanings that meant so much  
Shredded ideals flicker,  
flying, falling, silently,  
one-by-one  
to the ground.

Paper illusions build and build into piles of twisted origami cranes.  
Brutally, she snaps the necks,  
one-  
by-  
one  
and the cranes, cry,  
see all the others upside-down,  
limp heads dangling,  
hopeful, and hanging on.  
Dangling.

Something about a fight

and how bulging veins pull up festering words in stale sheets,  
wrapping cold within and keeping cold outside,  
squinting crane after crane into the big king bed,  
like a teddy bear sleepover gone wrong.  
Branches sweep against unshaved legs.  
Trying to spread her.  
Trying to let Sunlight back in.

Her eyes, seeing the night of all dark nights, sleep,  
in the way  
only open-eyes-of-darkness  
sleep.

### ► ***Nightshade Nights*** | Loren Mixon

Heirlooms handwritten in elongated edges  
stick their spiny, frayed folds in corners and cabinets.  
Directions battered and stewed for melenzena midnights,  
letters faded and bitter — committed to heart, not memory.  
Lessons taught in degorging and gorging on basil pesto sunsets  
in cramped and fragrant kitchens — love warmer than stove.  
Rich and tender is the dusk held dear  
when mother and daughter create sturdy, simmering memories,  
from youth addicted to aubergine occasions and weekday wishes.

Now, often alone dancing the edible dance  
far from familial fortitude and long roasted pans  
I grasp for the tucked away ritual in the reaches of my mind:  
frying, breading, drenching, savoring.  
Imbibing history and images of Alberti's past,  
nourished by knowing love in nightshade.

### ► ***Expanding of a Sphere (Arrival of a Potential)*** | Jacob Olsen

