

Tomato

By Joy Roulier Sawyer

for Chris Ransick, Denver Poet Laureate

1962-2019

Behold the tomato held in two hands,
cupped, cradled, red firm flesh
spilling over palms to wrists.

How did fruit grow heavy on the vine,
hidden from the goddam squirrels,
greedy cheeks stuffed with kale?

And why plucked here, now,
on a stilled August evening,
spinning its rich globe of shine?

Nothing else to be done, then,
but to slice cleanly in fours, salt,
savor our dinner on chilled salad plates.

This too is how our garden grew—
miracle, mystery, choosing and feeding,
sighs of summer sweetly satisfied,

a taste on the tongue,
a language for life.