

13 Ways to Digest a



Purple Coneflower

Martin Willitts Jr.



Echinacea has been used as a cure for colds, inflammation, chronic fatigue, ADD, influenza, bee stings, allergies, & eczema.

1.

A seed in a packet knows its solemn truth
without reading its promise

already it is dreaming

2.

Heal, coneflower, silence a cold,
do what you do best

a purple sun rises

3.

An inflamed wind inhales coneflowers
and feels better all week

tell the earth the good news:
a repair of fatigue
is on the way

4.

What a doctor does not know
can cure you

the coneflower winks its red eye
your nightmares are almost over

sparrows chatter like raindrops
about infinite possibilities
the garden hoe has already unearthed them

5.

13 coneflowers talk among themselves
in total agreement

what looks like a conspiracy
is an attachment
to the thing dreams are made of

13 heads bob mutely
needing nothing more to be said
one way
or the other

6.

The coneflower aspires
to match the picture on the seed packet
and more

it wants to stop traffic
like a woman undressing
sparrows out of her red breasts

no imperfections
rising to the occasion
and not to be the occasional

7.

it rains coneflowers
just when the dry ground was thirsty

8.

Counting coneflowers
from the pulse of the earth
becomes a woman's moans
in the lost wind
of thirteen promises
winking
into nothingness

9.

A coneflower grows out a saxophone
purple notes of loss
raining seed packets
where some seeds might fall
never amount to anything

but the ones
reaching the high notes

these
are the ones
worth smelling

10.

A sparrow lands on a coneflower
and takes off when it bends
never sees it straighten itself
calling, come back, come back,
sing to me

11.

If we turn it into a tincture
the coneflower could heal
what is wrong
between us
over distances
where winds never return

12.

We pour pitchers of pictures
of coneflowers
into wings of wind
into heart-shaped suns
into imperfect agreements
into healing
we can only dream about

13.

The thirteen sax notes are notations
of what to do

a sparrow without a song
is a wind without a song
is a song without coneflowers

is packets of old seed
our heart needs for healing

is thirteen promises
for repairing distance
great and small

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origamipoems@gmail.com

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