

# Poinsettia

by [Jeanne Murray Walker](#) in the [June 12, 2007](#) issue

The scarlet petals were floppy as old hats  
by March, and falling into piles on the rug,  
so I cut its plastic pot to free its roots  
and laid it by the compost in the mud.  
Busy that spring, I never noticed how  
it waited out the months, night after night  
in wind, in grueling rain and a late snow,  
inclining from the compost into light,  
its new leaves firming, shining, thick,  
like a novice of a strange order,  
as days warm, growing fierce and quick,  
blessing the lost plants I've lodged there.  
It rang like church bells, red, on the hour.  
Now let me learn to love what cannot flower.