

POETRY

DEIRDRE DWYER

Dinner Party

Trying to cook tacos
In a Japanese kitchen
with Narita-san fussing, nattering on,
I kneel on sun-burnt knees

to tables too low,
ask for bowls, plates,
“no, bigger, yes, a little smaller.”

Later, guacomole turning brown,
Narita-san tucks a pickled plum
into the riceball in her palm—

onigiri

which she's been wanting
all night.

onigiri: a very common food in Japan. It is a rice ball, with a filling of pickled plum, fish roe, etc. The word literally means “taking hold of (something) with your hands.” It is made by cupping hot rice in your hands and squeezing it into a ball or other shape. It is a homely comfort-food, to be taken along as a school-lunch, or to flower-viewing or sports events. —ed.