

## Baby Kale

All across the Sunbelt, the Bible Belt, the Cascades,  
bankers in Chicago, lesbian booksellers, math teachers, politicians,  
realtors, people who kayak in the East River, San Diego plastic surgeons, Maine  
fishermen who don't say many words say

*kale*

Plastic bags are microwaved in great numbers by nurses and truck drivers,  
fourth graders bring in kale chips for their birthday celebrations  
and their classmates are amazed, they run home and ask their mothers, please make me

*kale*

Local news stations visit farmers' markets (where patrons already whisper instead, "Turnip greens"); over  
pedicures, ladies (and men) discuss  
the French aversion and feel superior,  
they feel virtuous, they feel anxious-  
are they doing it right, are they doing it enough?

Father-in-laws ignore this trend, drink beer from cans, reach for handfuls of Cheetos (not  
realizing they've been replaced by their wives with a product containing a label mention's worth of  
*kale*)

Dying patients drink green hope, with a little too much texture for some  
people are chewing, pulling stem strings from their teeth, people are chopping

into salads named things like "Goddess" and "Vitality"  
babies are being named

*Kale*

Neurons are firing, things are changing in the brain on an evolutionary level,  
new myelin is growing and encasing axons and the next generation will be born  
with cultural-linguistic implications surrounding this phenomenon the likes of which  
have not been seen since

*broccoli*

Cells are regenerating and croaking and tumors are growing and some of them will die  
some of them will kill us  
some of these miracle leaves will be coated with salmonella or e. coli and a fright  
will spread the likes of which have not been seen since

*spinach*

Baby Kale will sleep, she will dream  
of animals because that's what babies do, her bones will grow  
and last awhile and she will get pedicures, she will consume,  
her mind will expand and contract with the exhalations of  
her prevailing culture and how she lives within it or reacts against it;  
there will be plastic bags, there will be beer.

The nurses will say, "What a beautiful baby,"  
the truck drivers will deliver palettes of diapers across vast distances,  
the kayakers will paddle, the surgeons will cut, the salads will be chewed and  
she will exist until she no longer does, a glimmer of one thing amidst all things,  
a representation of everything transmuted into an indivisible unit of *one*.