

TOTS AND OTHER POEMS

By Ricky Garni

The little blonde tot is playing
near the Cherokee Chocolate tomatoes.

Her future husband, the rogue, the swine,
is swiping a tiny handful of Klondike Rose
potatoes from the bin.

He turns to see her quiver. Her teensy tomato
hand trembles and he ponders:

Will it be raining by supertime?
For I have forgotten my slicker.

The tomatoes fall to the ground
and his wife begins to cry.

The tomatoes will never see
each other again.

VICTORY LAP

One year I celebrated my birthday with a coconut donut.
One of those big, fat, sloppy, heavy, oily ones that they
don't make anymore. I miss them terribly. But I must admit,
I take great pride every time I outlive something wonderful

like a big fat donut. Or a flower. For example: the yellow rose petals that covered you as you slept in the bathtub.

I had just turned 20.

PHOTORECEPTORS

I ordered Egyptian cotton because it sounds correct and restful. I don't give it another thought. Have I ever seen a picture of a cotton field in Egypt? No – not even among the many snapshots and bric-a-brac stores and View Masters and hand-tinted postcards that once littered the days.

Perhaps Egyptian is a color, or a style, or a person's surname.

Perhaps it is a code word for silkiness.

Perhaps the term was invented by PT Barnum or was a make-em-up by Edward Lear or was used once in a book by Jules Verne and it sounded right and so it just stuck.

Perhaps it is just a giant misunderstanding betwixt words and perceptions. I mean, have you ever discussed that philosophical quandary about color? About how two people might identify an object as being a 'red' chair but due to their photoreceptors or relative innate abstractness and how one might see a color that is completely different than another, they do? Or even, a different chair?

Perhaps with the letters that form the word "Egyptian" one might see silk, one might see baby softness, one might see

elegance, one might see expansiveness, One might see an Egyptian
in a field, one might see just an Egyptian, but a different Egyptian entirely.

A completely different softness of man, sleeping in a beautiful bed.
He says I am Egyptian cotton. I live in your heaven.

Any of these things might be true, or none, or all, and by this we might,
will, or might not understand Egyptian cotton

but none of these answers
will ever explain
the Pyramids.

Bio

Ricky Garni grew up in Florida and Maine, was educated at Exeter and Duke, and has lived off and on in the Triangle since 1977. Over the years he has worked as a teacher, wine merchant, studio musician, composer and graphic designer. He began writing poetry in 1978, and has produced over forty volumes of prose and poetry since 1995. He has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize on seven occasions.