

Clare Scott

Ficus

Each Sunday morning after jasmine tea,
wheat toast & *The New York Times* he takes
it from the corner of our bedroom out onto the patio
watering carefully
pruning dead branches
fertilizing once a month
letting it sit for an hour or so before returning it to
the tattered wicker basket & bringing it back inside
he has been doing this for seventeen years
almost as long as we have

the leaves now yellowing & letting go
maybe because it is fall & the light has changed
or the night air is cooler or draftier or drier
maybe because we are sleeping in separate rooms
due to insomnia & snoring & leg cramps & multiple
trips to the bathroom & the whoosh of his CPAP machine
each morning more leaves on the floor
he mists & sprays for mites & mealybugs
adds vitamins to the fertilizer
consults chat rooms at midnight

more leaves on the floor
the tree's branches brittle, almost bare
like an oak in the throes of December
waiting for spring
today only two leaves left
I pull them off

Claire Scott is an award winning poet who has been nominated twice for the Pushcart Prize. Her work has been accepted by the Atlanta Review, Bellevue Literary Review, Healing Muse and Vine Leaves Literary Journal among others. Her first book of poetry, *Waiting to be Called*, was published in 2015. She is the co-author of *Unfolding in Light: A Sisters' Journey in Photography and Poetry*.