**Anasazi**

James K. Zimmerman

I planted Anasazi beans, the ones

you gave me in the last brilliant

days, cool nights of May

they are ancient, you said, sacred

they come from desert pueblos

russet mesas burned by infinite

turning, the unseen wheel of time

in my hand, they sang the songs

of their tribal home, clad in maize

burnished calico, and cream

I planted them in earth black

as Anasazi eyes, touched them

once a week with water, just

enough to ease their parching

spindly threads reached up

to summer clouds, the blue

of June, flourished, green

and sinewed, wrestled roses

and tomatoes to the ground

still they sought the sere

expanse, the hard demanding

light of desert days, clarity

of desert nights, ancestral home

so I planted sticks beside them

helped them pray, proud and

straight, to the corn mother, to

dry arroyos of their dreams

and far from the scent of scrub

pine, of sagebrush, the austerity

of distant mountains, they

sprouted perfect flowers, hardy

and determined in the warmth

of their adopted soil

yet in September's waning days

October's knife-sharp chill, I

could not slake their loneliness

leaves began to fall, stems

began to fail, turn to brown

drop to black earth that did

its best to nurture them and

their calico children never came

empty-handed in the fading

autumn light, I tried to tell you

but you too were gone