

Tasting the world

Raspberries – strawberries – cherries –
these are what young Alex likes – red
luscious fruit – with juices that sing *dolce*
in the mouth and drip over the lips;
yet she's also fond of the vinegary tones
of olives, black and green, twists of parmesan
cheese, and the semi-quaver of a small gold
cumquat torn straight from the tree; and
some days, like last Christmas lunch, facing
the lens in lolly-pink dress, silver-star hat –
her hand reaches out for a thick slice
of lemon, yellow rind pocked and shiny,
and she chews on the flesh very slowly,
pensieroso, thoughtfully spurting the citric
notes between little white teeth, biting
close to the pith, then licks fingers clean.
Today, gleaning the garden, we sing
a summer pudding calling out our new
recipe: tear one sprig of sage, two pinches
of thyme, six blue petals, four mint green
leaves, a fist of hedge clippings, five sharp
grey stones. Mix with water and sand.
Take a stick. Bang *fortissimo* on pots and pans.

Sandy Fitts