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The Muse

I visit my muse

I know where she lives

She appears, wiping befloured hands
on her apron

I'm busy, she says.

I need a word, I say, and describe
its size and shape and colour

She nods and shambles off
nearly upsetting a stanza in her path

A phrase will do, I call after her,
a short one

She returns with nothing

The room was locked, she says,
and she can't find the key

I threaten to use a thesaurus

Well, she says,

if that's what you want

She sits down suddenly
at the edge of my mind
and turns her face away.

Later, when I'm driving,

my brain lights up with
a neon parade of words,
phrases, poems, each perfect

Stop, I cry, I don't have a pencil

Serves you right, she sniffs,

thesaurus indeed

Sandra Casey ©2000

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