Mock Orange

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Mock Orange

by Ted Kooser

The scent of mock-orange is stealthier
than memories I build in loneliness
and summer walks relieve the emptiness
of image-less shrines that might have honored her.
Mosaic-crusted walls, mere pieced arrays,
once captured moments; but they need repair.
The echoes of my footsteps fill the air

with silence, while the nights are strewn with days.
But, in the alleys where she scorned to walk,
in the sounds of unfamiliar summer nights,
I find the mock-orange, the sound and scent
of blossoms bursting, mysterious delights
of trying to remember — if she bent
to touch the petals — if we stopped to talk.