

Leaves

by [Lynn Domina](#) in the [December 6, 2017](#) issue

I have been thinking
about the difference between tradition
and cliché,
and about my father,
how each December he placed a classic red poinsettia
in my mother's hands, every year the same
gold foil wrapping the planter, the same
deep green leaves, and about how lately
I bring one home, experimenting once
with the white variant which was not white
but a sallow depleted beige.
I have been thinking about repetition's
assurance, regular
as a heartbeat, its soothing familiarity
until it stops
and a man falters,
drops, not petal
by dry petal, but fully,
suddenly, gone.