

This Is Love By Karlo Mila
(for David)

you've taken / the roots of / my thoughts on / what love is /
this understanding I've created over the years /
so ripe / so red / in your big hands / brown / custodial

you put them in a pot / large bucket / on your front
doorstep / a place in the Papatoetoe sun / this is love you
say / watering / tending / a careful eye at the end of the day

it is seeds sown in the hopeful spring / hiccups of hope /
scattered sheets / seed spread bed / it is shedding dead leaves
in autumn / and you prune / me / cutting fingertips
tenderly / bleeding softly into soil / blistering gently / the
test is you say / whether we will survive winter / there
will be many winters / soaked with rain / frost on car
window mornings

this is love you say / endurance through / every / every day /
season

this is what I have learned.

love is not a bunch of red roses / blossomed into the peak
of their beauty / cut at the height of their passion / long
stemmed / bikini lined / full lipped / red perfect

love is / the watering / the watching / the pruning / the
tending / the providing of new buckets / the finding of
new doorsteps /

love is not something one simply wears
behind their ears
in full bloom

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