

SMALL ELEGY

Here is your handwriting.
What a noise it makes this
morning. You are turning up
everywhere. You would like
what I'm planning for the house:
One of those ghostly globes
(a lamp) and some bamboo
to lead water to the azeleas.

The Japanese who run
the nursery remember.
Seeing me, they drop
everything. His wife touches
my arm. Mr. Nomura hides
his dainty trowel. "I know
what you need today," he
says, "something for the shade."

SCOT FREE

Today in Vocabulary II a guy asked
what vulva meant. It was a dare
and I took it, marching to the big
dictionary, reading that it was from
the Latin meaning covering as in,
"Hey, wake up. You're hogging all
the vulva." But everybody shrieked
that it meant External Female Genitalia!
"So what. It's just another noun,"
and I explained that any scary word
could be defused by saying it over
and over. "All together now: vulva
vulva vulva vulva vulva vulva
vulvavulvavulvavulvavulvavulva."
The room throbbed like a Corvette.

It was fun for a few minutes
and even those in the back wearing
boxing gloves weren't taking notes
in their New Testaments. Then we moved
on to words that would be on the quiz.

Today I heard that a lecturer in
psychology was reprimanded for showing
a Rorschach slide he identified as Lesbian
Mule Deer. But for now, I seem to be
in the clear.

-- Ronald Koertge

South Pasadena CA