

A Tea Party in the Co-op Parking Lot, or, the strong arms and soft belly of a gentlewitch incite summer sunlight in her brewing maiden's cheeks.

i. “You have such a striking
face, my dear; no need for make-up
a-

t'all!”
thinner
all the time
eyes trample
head and neck

a
contract

ii. “The only thing I did every day
was swab my cheeks
with chamomile tea.”

and stood-alone

hand-thrown

“(Of course maybe all
you have to
do is smile . . . !)”

iii. ([. . . For him.])

Eat right;
Avoid the sun;
Look at your stupid face!

Slough the dead
Bikini;

It's one less thing to be shy about.

iv. “Thirty years I
was with him, you

know” survive or
natal course:

on lazy evenings
bestir yourself

in the bath of bubble
Pledge

not to make-up
not to drink-up

but clutter your frown with boils!

Bedtime autonomy
bodily:

push all you've ever
known
to squall.

*Chamomile and narcissus may be
mistaken. "My dear,*

not all abuse is physical."

*v. You can find chamomile in the most unexpected of places;
for instance, she thrives in the cracks of sidewalks.*

I place the double-paper bagged produce gently
on the Lincoln coup's passenger—

Late

at home I dump
a box of tea bags
in the tub

soak yellow

and shirk
the relentless
phone.

*Her German name is alles zutraut,
meaning capable
of anything.*