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Once it gets a roothold  
it is thick-leaved  
on growth,  
thinks big,  
is heavy-handed  
and blunders into everything.  
It lets the breeze  
at no extra charge  
wade through its foliage.  
It does this  
because it's generous, keen,  
extravagant  
and likes to give  
all that it's got  
for love.

*Gunnera*

The hybrids of heuchera are *Quilter's Joy*,  
*Hailstorm* and *Harry Hay*,  
*Chocolate Ruffles* and *Plum Pudding* –  
as if some were edible and others to do with  
the weather. Once, they were coral bells  
in the campanulists' dictionary...  
but now it is for the foliage  
that each is deeply loved –  
those lush rich purple leaves  
mottled with silver and bronze –  
the mottled sheen of shot-silk  
you cannot put a price on  
even if you try.

*The Hybrids of Heuchera*

These fire-breathers are barking mad.  
Nip them in the bud  
and they pop up delicate as paper kites  
in fierce red, pink or yellow –  
start cracking the whip –  
mouths opening and closing  
like little monsters.  
Children love them  
the way they pull faces  
and lose their rag  
grinning back like tiny tots  
teasing their tormentors.

*Snapdragons*

Vibrant in red, orange and yellow  
their colourscape is pure marmalade:  
a seductive number  
in a hot-headed border  
with a sombre backdrop of  
late summer sedum.  
More American than Greek  
they would still have us weep  
tears of Troy  
at the sight of their bright antiquity.

*Helianthus*

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be printed from the website.

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by Lauri Burke

**Origami Poetry Project™**

**The Hybrids of Heuchera**

Neil Leadbeater © 2016

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with a friend.

## The Hybrids of Heuchera



Neil Leadbeater

## *Heartsease*

is love-in-idleness, the wild card  
that plays the wild pansy –  
pulls monkey-faces  
at children – knows all about  
affairs of the heart,  
is Oberon's flower in Shakespeare;  
three-faces-in-a-hood  
that thrives off neglect...  
but mostly it's the way  
you hang your head  
at the onset of rain  
that I like the most...  
and the way you go to bed.

## *Dock*

How we mistreated you,  
tore off your leaves  
to rub against our skin  
hoping that you would take the  
sting out of living.  
We hurt you  
because we ourselves were hurt.  
We lashed out  
and left the nettle alone.  
It was cowardly, I know,  
and our shame grew  
like the green stain  
you left on us  
the mark on the palm  
of the hand.