

Want Tea

When I met Ruben, he was drinking from a cup. Would you like some tea?
he asked me.

No, I don't want any tea.

Ruben met Jeanine. They had me to dinner.

Would you like some tea, Ruben said.

No thanks.

Ruben's table was a well set table, meticulous, the particulars significant
because they opened onto everything.

How about some tea, Ruben said.

No, don't want tea.

I went away for five years. When I returned, Ruben said, Want some tea?

No tea thanks.

Ruben and Jeanine moved. I visited them in New York City,

Would you like some tea?

No, thank you.

Ruben and Jeanine moved again, west. I came to visit. Would you like
some tea? Not yet, I said. Then they had a daughter. I came to see her.

Ruben said, Do you want some tea?

Yes, I said. I would like to try some tea.

Then Jeanine died.

Do you want some tea -- Ruben said.

Lots of tea, I said. I want tea and tea trays and pots and kettles. I want tea from
China and India and that tea from Russia -- I want that. On Sunday I want Assam
tea. The monkey picked tea from the mountains of Fujian -- I want that. And
those teas from Africa? I want those. The first flush from India, and the second
flush, and the wooden spoons and the ivory scoops, I want them. The jade cup
with the hat on it, I want that.

I want tea. Everybody wants tea. I want it and I want it now.

I am drinking tea

until I am done.

James Stone Goodman