

Amaryllis.

Something has grown in my mother's kitchen this Winter. It is tall, beautiful, and bright red. If you're in the room, you can't help but * look at it. It's an amaryllis. It was given to her as a Christmas present, and she has been growing it from a bulb since then. They are originally from South Africa, a member of the lily family. As there are no plants growing here in the Winter, it is common to give the gift of an amaryllis bulb in a pretty pot, as a plant to be grown inside the house. Once planted, it will quickly grow tall, and produce a stunning flower. It's the kind of plant that you want to photograph up close. Its stamens are a contrasting yellow, and hold a lot of pollen. It's similar to some of the orchids that my mother has grown through the years; they also have a very fleshy*, waxy feel to them, and have very rich colors. The other day when I visited her, I was reminded that I also have bulbs at home that need to be planted. Actually, in the Autumn, I bought three bags of bulbs, to be planted that season in the garden. Let's just say that I put them 'out of sight'*, and they are still in the bags. They have actually started to sprout, even though they are not in soil. Apparently, even though I missed the season, I can still plant them in pots and keep them in the house where they will slowly grow. Then, in the Spring, I can transplant them outside. It's a bit like the potatoes that I buy for making chips, baked potatoes or mashed potatoes. If don't use them in time, they will have sprouted all sorts of roots and become inedible. Plants are programmed to grow, and they will do it, whether or not we are taking care of them. A friend of mine told me that one year she planted too many zucchini plants (they are also called courgettes). They had a car parked next to the vegetable patch that was not used much. Before anyone knew it*, the zucchini vine had grown all over and inside the car! All this talk of plants is making me yearn* for the Spring. First things first though; I need to find those bags of bulbs and get them planted!

Related vocabulary: you can't help but..., fleshy, out of sight, before you know it.

1. You can't help but admire him. Everybody thinks he is brilliant.
2. These apricots are so fleshy. They have a lot of body, and are filling.
3. He didn't really clean the house. He just put everything away, out of sight, in the cupboard.
4. You'll have a child, and, before you know it, he will have grown, and will be leaving for college.