

Pretending to Garden

I knelt down as if in prayer- wanting my knees to be soiled.

I pulled on the chewed, palm-worn cotton gloves

& patted my hands against one another.

"En tus pupillas" is all I could summon while treasure hunting for needless rocks.

I grabbed, clutched & stock piled them into a pale blue bucket.

I used my hands to knead & press.

For the first time my arms & hands felt as if they had a ritual.

My fingers played on the coarse pieces of homeless gravel too long & the suns outstretched tentacles were of little help.

Swiping at my crooked brow & leaving wet behind is what my neighbor saw.

This is how my afternoon started and this is how it will end.

World's Best Fried Chicken

I changed my mind about you next to the brown crusted anchor with missing spokes.

My decision about how I need to see you changes daily-

-But-

This particular time, (the one with the brown anchor propped against the wall), I didn't like you.

More revealing is that I hated me for imagining you to be appealing.

I hoped w/in the next few sentences you spewed I would have decided against hating you & reverted back to simple apathy.

The peculiar part is I don't remember what was said, what your position was, but I know it was the mention of the Theravada School that incited me- I think.

Ginger Root

The smell of ginger root being cooked was so strong I struggled to cloak the sound of your laugh.

I tried rearranging my closets, full of furry blue winter coats & coffee mugs, but I started choking on ginger.

I shoved on the black raincoat & pushed my bare, cracked & cold feet into dry brown clogs & rushed outside.

The air somehow didn't feel cold enough- I needed it in my face, whipping me around.

I stood at the trunk of my car & unlocked it.

I rifled through a broken set of painted lawn chairs, a sweater with silver sequins, more coffee mugs, an iron & teapot, & endless books.

I started digging deeper- near the back seat searching for the scent of chopped ginger mixed w/ lemon.

It was in there somewhere but I just couldn't get to it.

I grabbed the sweater & teapot & ran back into our apartment.

I shut & locked the door.

I scanned the kitchen stove to see if it was left on.

I shrugged & figured someone in the neighborhood was cooking with ginger like you used to.

Re-occurring Dream (2)

Traveling is what we did.
We weren't hiding like they assumed- rather we enjoyed falling in- ceaselessly- in more than 1 city.
This time- you & the phantom daughter appeared during my stay in the rural hills of somewhere central
in one of the Americas-
I reacted as if the room service of toast & eggs had been ordered.

Always the children first (that's what I wanted you to think) - then I enveloped you.
I was immediately reminded of the way way we talked of race, politics, babies, & writers & then made
love w/out any prompting.
Afterwards, you were charged to create-
I wanted to believe that I was your muse.

Back in my canvas flapped bungalow reacting as much like a family as we could pretend, we ventured
outdoors.
Enjoying the white pebbled & glass sharped sands & the occasional milky image of the water lapping
excruciatingly silent up on the weathered rafts no one had rented that morning- or was it night?
You were sitting too still- maybe enjoying the silence too much.
The little girl you brought with you subsided into more of an idea-an idea that I relished, even though in
all my soberness under the covers I repeated to you the tale of my unending distaste for the smell of
children's laughter.

The gray & blue laps of water in the shore were now becoming distant.
You left w/ the young playful girl & I never had proof of you being there.
I searched for a slice of you-
The you I once knew, but found none.

Upon a poetry reading

I watched the crease on her right cheek push in like hooks while she droned on & on...
the eagles, the moths, & other rarely seen & even less talked about animals & insects were her
emphasis. Save the----, Remember the-----,
Enough!
End this endless tirade on nature's beauties.
More of wild mushrooms-
More of dead dogs flung around wildly in plastic bags-
More of fishing rods slung over pubescent boys shoulders.

