

## **Unlikely Metaphors** *OR* **Our Love *Is* a Red, Red Rose**

Young love is an erratic bat,  
or seemingly so,  
darting and diving,  
making us dodge and duck  
unnecessarily.

Nubile love is a clod of earth  
scooped from the field  
rich with humus,  
and a fat, wet worm,  
that stains our hand.

Long love is a brackish pool  
commingling, for us,  
fresh and brined;  
odor of dried seaweed  
with scent of pine.

Lasting love is the flower  
with velvety whorled petals,  
color of the humor  
dripping from our fingers  
which earnestly grip its stem.

## **Trysted Kiss**

What harm would come  
for our lips to pass,  
to pause,  
to press  
for but a moment?  
For if in this  
infinitesimal time  
our act be sin,  
so should be, then,  
our dance  
to *Besame Mucho*,  
with commingling breaths  
and entwining limbs.  
Rather, let us  
momentous make it,  
to confess,  
if we must,  
with assurance,  
lest we,  
in its brevity,  
deny  
the occurrence.

## **Moonflowers**

He proffered, one night, his love for her  
as she mounted the eastern sky  
and trekked across the inky night,  
a pale ochre and full up high.

The shivering leaves and grassy hills  
she coated with a silver dew  
and, magically, the shadows warmed  
with a cranberry-violet hue.

“You cannot have me, sir,” she shone,  
“though I am flattered by your woo.  
My sway with oceans you may use;  
my light and inspiration, too.”

“If I can’t embrace your radiance;  
and if I may not hold your glow:  
nor feel you wane from arc to new,  
every evening shall be my woe.”

So, he turned and humbly bowed his head,  
to tend to *fleurs de lune*, instead.

## **Ten Sins**

Our first sin was the looks we gave  
the second was our dance;  
the third and fourth, our dialogues  
through Greens and Adirondacks;  
the fifth wrong was the kiss from which  
we didn't turn away;  
and six, the prose and poetry  
in our emails every day;  
the pleasures of our nipples shared  
the seventh of our crimes;  
half-naked came our eighth offense  
and being fully so, misdeed nine;  
but number ten is perhaps the worst:  
denial of our hearts--  
retreating to the status quo  
pretending to play our parts.  
The initial nine are history  
the past can never be undone.  
but futures true, living honestly,  
will let forgiveness—ours—be won.

## **“I’ll Never Make It!”**

But he does.

The long hallway behind him,  
he collapses on the bed.

“Poor Mom. I feel sorry for poor Mom.  
She can’t walk.”

Lying on his back,  
staring upward at the concrete ceiling,  
Dad is silent for a while  
as Poor Mom, sitting in her power chair,  
rambles on,  
complaining about the food in the care center,  
halting, searching for the words  
which I mercifully fill in.

“What?” Dad suddenly asks.

Mom talks on,  
segueing to memories of her old job,  
her former boss,  
and her abilities he had recognized.  
When she looks, I nod appropriately  
to the story I have heard a dozen times,  
and gaze at the collages of their lives together,  
the photos of the generations they produced;  
at newspaper stacks, unopened crackers, paper plates;  
piles of clutter crowding every flat surface,  
encroaching like death upon them in this tiny room  
they now call home.