

**AMBUSH ME AGAIN**

You with your hazel kestrel eyes  
Your soft controlled explosions  
You bring coffee, Benjamin Britten  
is playing, your sweet agenda  
is what, today, exactly?

We, we swam cold inlets  
together, not knowing  
whether we were in Canada  
or had crossed the waterline to Maine,  
Splashing back and across water borders.

You japed my gifts of osprey, jumping  
silver pike, gliding oars, my unpicked  
bouquet of purple lupins, Silurian pebbles  
almost blue, beds of club moss soft under  
your wet bare feet, you reached down for wild Sweet William.

I loved you in our island hut at night  
past stepping barefoot on wild mushrooms,  
Canadian cool at August's haunted end  
the bright, *dark*- spun Milky Way  
a loop of Ferris wheel, our foreplay.

**Sudanese Boy Adopted by Putnam Couple**

This is October.

The wine-sap light drawn across

City, River, Palisades

I think I will tell

young Samir

about Pumpkins,

Samir has never seen these

Vegetable suns,

His life has advanced to date

unimpeded by their absence,

Yet he has missed something---

not giraffe sized ferns

not papayas

shouting markets nor

bathing in great puddles

by the roadside's edge

in the unending summer

of that former life,

He knows little of cold,

less of Indian corn

of frost,

of aster stippled fields

and owls

and hurrying

and pumpkins.

**RED /or High End of the Spectrum: poem 8/2/2015 shiels**

Today in the bright *Light* of day  
 a red deer vaulted over my car on a curve  
 and dodged—I think-- a line of cars  
 in the opposite lane  
 to safety. My sedan, oblivious to this drama,  
 moved me on down the road--  
 shone midway between Chinese  
 and fire engine red;  
 it was a red day.

Nothing in Latvia will cause me to beg my friend to  
 pull her Volkswagon to the side of the road by a  
 green sea of *rapsis/flax*, like the splash between  
 flax-stems-- of poppies—*Magonites*. They grow together. I  
 always want to cut some of these carmine stars  
 to put in water, knowing sadly  
 that they will not last a day-- out of soil.

Our eye chases red or red chases our eye  
 to the delicate feet of the mourning dove on snow,  
 to red's tiny splash in a Vermeer—The Girl's hat,  
 The pearl earring girl's lips

You pomegranates  
 You oozing childcorpses  
 You cardinals lighting on bare-beeches  
 or in the Vatican, You  
 sea-snapperfish on my plate  
 You tell-tale hearts  
 under the floorboards.

Do gently cut your boy's-arm  
 just a bit and me mine,  
 and we touch, become brothers.

The 13.8 billion light--year farthest, farthest  
 out galaxy, colorized, perhaps  
 but what do you suppose that color is?  
 And when I die what red remaining  
 within me will be motionless.

Toussaint Louverture, Breda Plantation, 1791

Your *Ayiti*, Toussaint, your Haiti,  
blazes now from the northern Cap to Tiburon,  
the fires of sugar cane and  
fragrant white plantation bodies  
blaze now in Jeremie, Jacmel, and Port-au-Prince  
blood dries on the black backs  
of four hundred thousand slaves now—  
your Legionnaires who carry torches in the black nights  
slaves refusing to be slaves brandish torches down  
sandy paths to the verandas and smoke-houses of the Blancs—  
Mulattoes, too. Slaves who light, Identify, and burn, light and burn.  
The French rise too in Paris, Orleans, Marseilles  
and all the *paysage*, Normandie to *Pyrenees Departement*,  
and young Napoleon grows restless with his fellow troops  
aching for order and for breath, Toussaint, he reads of you, Toussaint,  
in his barracks, but does not sweat your sweat, Yet.

**Distraction**

The about sixteen girl, slim in a breeze-blown,  
cornflower housedress  
carries a basket of white bedlinens fresh from the line  
across the late March yard to unpainted porch steps.

This time though she sits with the basket on the top step.  
A chore not finished, her head at a three quarter angle  
gazing tense with feral eyes toward day's almost finished sun,

Lost in something distracted  
almost waiting for her Aunt Claire to scold gently  
*Bring these in for folding, get the rest of the socks,*

Still she hesitates, rapt, just this once  
An almost warm Oklahoma breeze across purple sage  
A last ray lighting up a crocus cluster by the porch

*I could be somewhere else not here, she thinks.*

The old farmhouse and barn and her freckled cheeks  
are bathed in rose light, she wonders  
if her mother is OK lying in that  
pine box put seven feet  
under the hard earth  
by the pear tree  
a year ago today.

