

POETRY



MARRIED LOVE

As they sat and talked beneath the boundary trees
In the abandoned park, neither one mentioning
Her husband, or his wife, it seemed as though
Their summer shadows had detached themselves
In the confusion of those thousand leaves; but no more
Than they could call those shadows back from the air,
Could they ignore the lives they had undone,
And would undo once more, that afternoon,
Before giving in to what they knew, had always known...
And yet, in turning away, what they would say was not
That thing, but something else, that mild excuse
That lovers use of how things might have been
Had they met somewhere else, or in some better time,
Were they less like themselves than what they are.

SHEROD SANTOS

KNITTING

I

I collect blackberries along the highway, despite
suspicion of roadside contamination, a fear that was not
my companion in childhood when blackberries and Grandma and
ocean visits all added up to wholesome pies and love with no
knowledge of Nagasaki, Saigons and Salvadors.

Back on the coast road, ocean nears and air delivers
the clean freedom smell. And on the radio, no ocean
waits, only a war that we have written before.

Beside the sea, where safety comes to me, I keep no radio.

II

The kite flyer handles two, tai-chi style against the sky.
Balancing sand and sky, he leans, he kneels before his instrument.
He cranes skyward with his kite

while my eyes look to my running the surf,
stoop to find delicate's fingernail in sand,
and I tell myself some people collect countries
instead of shells.

Some stick has traced LOST CAUSE in the sand — sets me wondering
whose stick, which cause? The pristine sands? The person
missed at sea today? Air, freedom fresh?
The peace.

III

Wet sands reflect Sun's set, hold auroras
like opals, or oil strewn upon another shore where
yesterday, the tanker spewed a darker, thicker liquid
than the splash of balloons we children threw.

Colored onion, horizon layered papaya-red, purple blue,
horizon's bigness makes small the light house, and the island,
and how small is that tumult brewing south of freedom, and
how big the folly to our souls.

The first star,
placed to the right above the rock,
signals night.

Fires flicker like fears.

Safety comes, while ocean knits the universe,
wave by wave.

GERRY FOOTE

SPIDER, FRECKLE, TRAVELING

My man baby
bury me in the sand at the beach
at the place where the water touches
dry grains
some in your beard
some in your hair
where you're growing bald
(you say no way)
where my fingers rest
where my fingers comb
my fingers combing
my fingers loosening
dry grains
falling like spider, freckle,
traveling.

Mineral mineral animal vegetable
diamond diamond spider grape
I could play this way forever
if I stop to think

My man baby
there is milk on your mouth
just where the dark lips meet.
That's where I love to look
that's where my eyes look
that's where my eyes drink
that's where I love
my eyes looking
look eyes
link.

My man baby.
Bury me in the
sand at the beach.
Put a lot of sand on my body

SUSAN ANDERSON

CLEARCUT AT BREAKTIME

Sitting in the disorienting rain
I see it: where once in wilderness
the big trees stood like a civilization,
the scrub brush wages civil war
for the light, rain-forest fratricide,
the blood of struggles dripping after a rain.
The boundary of a true wilderness
is the distance a grizzly can walk in a lifetime,
or this is just wilderness with us in it,
having our heyday,
our souls those small rushlights on the planet.

I see slots for springboards
in the crumbled stumps, the questioning curl
of rusted cable reared from red duff,
old leather tongues of boots
out of mud, the last quarry of famous men.
The boundary of a true wilderness
is the face you wear, what you dress up in,
like rain or the lifetime of a grizzly,
or this is just wilderness with us in it,
winter blood running brown
down a rainy hill of shrines,
down through a silver culvert at the road.

WILLIAM CHAMBERLAIN