

Van Arsdale

Russell Peters

My wren green river has a rind of rocky beach
It is a stretched scene like Waikiki with
Sunning girls up from the city.
These eyes shine slow on fire smiles
For boys with banged up pick ‘um up trucks.
Darling these kiddos-flirting in the water’s passage;
Their lumpy fumbling in the new oldness of love.

They are little golden apples of
Summer hides cinnamon’ed with sunshine.
Free falling in the debris fields of inner tubes,
Pink petal skins and souls with pitted seeds
Like stone fruit or neighborhood dogwoods.

So much like flowers in orchid green water
Or the tumbled bells of foxglove in absinthe.

The northern fennel riots in yellow blooms;
Where Rabbit weirs bury the banks and
Marry the tangled blossoms of star thistle.

There’s a new crop of country boys in old-town
Who linger loud in line at the liquor stores;
They are the farmer’s tans and squeaky biceps
That convey a clear, country, authenticity.
They buy silver canned beer using
Somebody’s big brother’s bent ID.

Looking like spit out pips of watermelon seed,
Floats spiral circles around columnar struts.
Red necked girls in swimsuits, shaky cold, are still
Drinking in long pulls off gold flavored malt liquor.
Little forked fingers ask for blue drags of smoke
Packaged in filter tip Parliament light lungfuls.

It is here where a skinny boy is laddering himself
Shivering into cold and surrendering
To the thigh high cascade of sprouting aqua.

I give all of myself over willingly
To the parched pan of alluvial plains
That are my stackable shelves of fallible memory.
There are constellations of sand in my bed
That still belong to the waking dreams of last summer.

In the wild onion and hip high mustard,
I sense the longing blooms that did grow.
In those edifying roots are the beautiful things
I've kept in the small red chambers of my heart.

I keep them close, at least I do now, selfishly;
For my mind is spilling a rainbow shrapnel
Into the little river eddies of remembering.