

Sabrina Ito

Red

It sprays like bullets
from gunstock,
killing all
that is untamable
to the Hunter,
in his red wool cap,
hinged with flaps,
which block the cold
and the sound
of so many men
downed
in the streets
that now run red
with blood.

Red is how we see
the world now.
It is our vision
tinged with homicide,
seeking comfort
in tragedies,
memorialized.

Red is hatred,
red is lust,
red is the gathering
of dissimilar things.
It is the absence
of harmony,
but the presence

of Truth.
Red is the life spring
of youth,
which is perhaps why
these days,
I am hoarding
all things red.

So that when I scream
myself awake
from nightmares,
I can reach out for it -
knowing how red
is always lurking
somewhere in the darkness,
waiting for the right moment
to leach onto my skin
and suck from my pores
all the beige-colored moments
of the day.

Only my nightmares
can know how
I am tainted by red.

For, in my dreams,
Nevada deserts
are swarming
with white-robed angels -
arms extended,
eyes dead.
They drag the hems
of their gossamer skirts
in the red dirt,
collecting balls
of tumbleweed,
that clang together
like church bells.

For these souls,
none but brushfires
burning down mesas

can, or will ever do -
because they are tired
of everyone
calling them angels,
they are tired of hearing
our 'thoughts and our prayers.'
They are calling for rebellion
while the world's still pretending,
that red can be anything other
than a primary color.

And so, they will bleed
into each carmine-hued sunset,
they will blast
through each fire
on the hearth.
They will blaze
through our cornea
each time we stare
at the sun,
so we can't help
but be reminded
of how Hunters
are blinded
because they
choose to shut
their eyes,
to the world.

Tasting

you hold your glass / like a sommelier / tipping dark, vinous liquid / into light -

you measure color / thickness of syrup / against the tint / of the lips / of she / who sips
that wine / which now warms / the cheek / and glows / the face,

distracting shadows / from / shape-shifting / night,

and women / like me / who cling / to dredges / of silt-bottomed seas / long hair twisting up / beneath pools /
of gradient / light.

I am thirst / and blood wine / coating the teeth / and the gorge. / I am woman, / who has been sunk / into the
darkest / of canyons.

My fingernails cut carbon / into rock-faced caves. / I bleed / love songs / as echoes / through oxygen-thin /
days.

so, whatever you / call love / burns through me / like brushfire. / there is / no tilling here / for yield, / because
anything / worth harvesting / long ago scalded / or went to seed,

even before / your hollowed 'hellos' / splashed like table wine / into dirt, / absorbing / all evidence of spoil /
and last night's / dinner party.

something I once called, 'forget' / breathes no / forgetting here. / at least, / not in the hands of a sommelier /
who tastes / with words, / who feels / with show, / and laughs / in the glow

of she, / who sips / that wine,

though your fingerprints / are branded all over me,
and your body / is mark-free / of mine.

Not Dysthymia

there's a sneaking element
you can't overcome
that drains you
of your watchfulness,
drowning your consciousness
instead, with dread
until you find yourself
fetal-positioned
on the bathroom floor,
lash deep, in weeping.

sounds of words
intended to comfort,
wobble and shake
as they travel through
your ear canal.
to you, they sound
like nothing
more than hope submerged
in a lukewarm bath
of open-veined
desperation.

it is the slow,
deliberate decay
of everything you once had
the moxie to wish for,
but that is somehow now
bent on forcing your hand
to scratch from your list
all that feels meaningless
because you feel no longer
entitled, to any of it.

Mirror App on my iOS

These post-childbearing years
have aged me some -
wrinkles from too many compromises,
deep folds from abandoned expectations.

And, once youthful momentum is lost,
what choice do we have,
but to decompose, as gracefully as we can?

Yet, we are enticed by new notions
as they are marketed on Instagram,
of what it could mean to *start fresh*, or *renew*.

And, before you know it, you are posting
your best photo-shopped editions
of the *fearless* no-makeup selfie
and the *courage* to go 'splendidly grey.'

Then you sit back, relax,
and enjoy social media -
where everyone is kind
and tells people,
'I love you.'

Instagram Poetry

Give me fast.
so I can acquire,
then pass
Through.
to the next
wanting.

I yearn.
to be dissatisfied
most of the time.
Because,
isn't that.
what hurry
really entails

Let it be
cranked out
in haste.
offer up
Some half-truths
that are easy...
to understand.
I need FairyTale
wisdom
to guide.
my life, day-by-day.

though. I would hate
for my identity.
to be mistaken
for a pop culture fad

its really all. nothing
more then trickery -
A weapon you use.
to conspire with
social media; always
On the look out
for another way.
To deceive.