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Three Poems

by Amy Nawrocki

Loving the Maybes

When lips are lonely for hydration and the landscape has just passed by, when the body consents to yield its search for a hand-out, and you can only lean against the bark of a tree, but not the tree itself, close your eyes and wait for hues of green to soak your gaze. Wait as shades of indigo coax you out of hypnosis, then endeavor to spin in the earth's lonely trajectory without wings and fall headfirst into the mango light of sunrise. Embrace the possibility that a boomerang returns not because it knows its aim, but because it loves the accident of color.

Embargo

Thinking avant-garde rather than criminal, we snickered to each other when we slid nine dollars Canadian across the counter for the *Cohiba*, packed Havana leaves away, and sealed our fate as smugglers.

It is a muggy July evening when at last we take it out of the makeshift humidor in the coffee table, clumsily knife off the end and sit patio-side for the smoke. As the sky shimmies and dark cherry embers roast at the end of the wrapped cylinder, my lungs fill. You blow silver rings and we sip young scotch, yet with each inhalation we journey closer to wiry hands folding leaves intoxicated by peat and moss, earth-rich men rolling a hundred at a time. Loving the flavor and richness, we become defectors from history and recognize there is more honesty in a Cuban cigar than in all our charred and amateur rituals.

Caesura

After watching the logs crack and char, heat stretching to my bare shins, and daylight fading to its perforation, the riverside tent closes us in for a sleepless night. A nearby campsite chatters into the late evening, and we beg the shades for sleep that arrives only with shackles. The July air is damp, and I shiver beneath skimpy layers, a mistake the cold night reminds me

to pay. With every sigh my waking self catches the beginning of rest, only to throw it back to the dampness. When the edge of morning hacks in, we lumber up and slug the short way to the foul outhouse, then return to the dew-wrapped tent. Grumpy, cold, I fold myself into you, my head finding the slope of your chest; into the crux of sleep we fall together, a shared pleasure we had never known. We turn as one into the shell of a spoon, your arms robed around me, and in this posture, we fight the tremors of the long night and doze, saving bones from a frigid lair, saving the next day from our sure exhaustion. We flame into the now.

Amy Nawrocki teaches English and creative writing at the University of Bridgeport. Her most recent chapbook, *Nomad's End*, was published by Finishing Line Press in 2010. A work of nonfiction, *A History of Connecticut Wine: Vineyard in Your Backyard*, coauthored with Eric D.Lehman, was published in Spring 2011 by The History Press.

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