

POETRY

Six Poems

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Six poems about Bermudian colonial life.

Keywords: Bermuda; Postcolonial; Exile Poems

Falling in Love with My Father in the Snow

Because when we came to America,
the landscape was black and white,
snow and dark bark like the blotted print of
the New York Times he read on Sundays.

Because he brought us here in January,
when sleet swept across the horizon,
like a curtain to erase what I had
known before, the colours of an island.

Because when he drove a car, held a steering
wheel in his hands, a faucet to turn off,
on. He was happy as traffic rushed by
in the streams of water he was so thirsty for.

Morning Flight

It is not a hearse exactly, as the black
taxi van beams through the night,
makes a way through the curved
Bermuda lanes, to pick me up. Not

an out of body experience exactly,
as the radio cab clicks in and out,
with locations, streets my memory
might scan near death, now packs

for the journey: *South Shore, Sandys,
Hamilton, Flatts Inlet, Salt Kettle.*

As if the driver turned over in her sleep,
mutters details from a good day's work.

Not resurrection exactly as the flight
takes me up into an even blue, where
turbulence smooths out like rumpled
clothes in my baggage will after spin/dry.

Rock Solid

Bermudians don't need rocking chairs
to *cool out*, relax. The ocean will do
with the tide quick-sanding the beach,
leaving while arriving, such a sway of water.

Bermudians remember the hand steadies
the boat slapping up to the dock like
a pup to a bitch's teat, jumps up in the air.
Bermudians need a solid chair while they

watch the horizon, waves rise up like
children to peek over the flat line fence,
to see what is beyond, not being tilted
back, forth bringing it in, out of focus.

Island Bound Mail

The sign at the Post Office
shows what a terrorist
package might look like.

Just like the one I send,
has a clump of stamps in
the shape of Matisse's Snail.

A school of fish swims
the front, headed up
for the surface. Bits of

scotch tape here, there,
like a snapper scaled.
And the loose brown

package paper, a sweater
a sibling hands down
to you, big, baggy,

the Shetland Wool
unravels into the string
wound round and round.

The postmistress asks if
anything is explosive
inside. I want to say *Yes!*

*Books have been known
to cause revolutions, pages
turning, fan many a fire!*

The non-terrorist package
has the US Postal Eagle.
Swift, eyes anything out

of uniform, what strays across
lines, roams 3rd class mail, it
is eager to pick up in tallows.

I is for Immigrant

The vertical you become
leaving your country.

I is for how you see
differently, eye pupils learn
another country. I is for
I'm a migrant now. I is
for the two stitches sewn
across a border, top one
holds the fray of exit,
bottom, the pull of return.

Shakespearean

We stare at the jaws of the white shark,
teeth sharp as cut diamonds for
a Harry Winston necklace.

They must have had their own
beauty, a tiara shimmering in
the silk of the dark undersea.

But we cannot look without
seeing ribbons of red, the un-packaged
human. Neither can we look

at its snare without remembering
the slaves harvesting bright jewels
in a dark pit in Africa. Beauty

and treachery so close, so
much a part of the ocean where
the lionfish, dazzling as

a sequined evening purse,
hordes and steals, floats in
with its striped Shakespearean collar.

Competing Interests

The author has no competing interests to declare.

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