

I Do Not See Them Here

Water calls me still
 cool depths of shattered rainbows
 to hide from the heat of the sun
 and the hot red earth.

Della robia blue
 the colour of the virgin's robe
 and of the jacaranda blossoms
 which fell like carpet across the streets.

Flamboyants followed
 crushed scarlet passion
 blazing down the streets
 of tunnel vision.

All summer long
 my feet were coloured crimson
 by bleeding mulberries
 beneath the tree where I climbed
 to hide and feast,
 crushing sweet liquored berries into
 juice smeared mouth.

From under the leaves
 I could see the gardener
 and hear him call out.
 But I never recognized his cry
 nor saw that my berry smudged fingers
 were stained the colour of blood.

Perhaps
my eyes
were blinded by the sun
shining off the water
behind the passion fruit hedge
which hid us.

Perhaps it was the brilliant bougainvillaea,
the moonlight scent of frangipani,
or the hot red earth beneath my feet
which distracted me from
the smoky hole
at the bottom of the garden
where they lived,
firelight flickering
in black eyes
which bore the weight of history
swelling like a tidal wave
even then.

Now
there is snow
and drifting snow,
an Arctic front.

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