

BurntBlue

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Dans "BurntBlue," cueillir des fruits des champs et faire de la confiture ne sont pas que des moyens pour se sentir mieux et se rétablir après un assaut; les méditations d'une femme sur les fruits des champs donnent constamment lieu à une méditation sur soi, sur les relations de soi avec les autres. Une économie de l'écriture est aussi une économie de subsistance et de survie.

Lorsque la confiture se met à brûler, la narratrice est assaillie une fois de plus par des idées à répétition: "Que t'est-t'il arrivé pour que tu ne le fasse pas mieux. Ne te sens tu pas mieux encore, après toute cette thérapie. . . Sois attentive. Ce que tu n'as pas été." Mais elle remarque que la confiture de bleuets a un goût sucré malgré les morceaux de confiture brûlée et la narratrice découvre que le chaudron de confiture — résultat de son labeur dont le contenu lui est familier — peut lui appartenir complètement. Le chaudron de confiture n'a pas à la représenter, elle qui fut ruinée; il n'a pas à être une métaphore pour elle.

winter's hard pack loosens
eventually gives way to
pink laurel in muskeg blue berries
on the esker she inspects the plant's crown
pointed ring a function of the fruit
leftover from differentiating
immersed in itself, prickles
doesn't require a queen
but wind, a bear's slapping tongue
she picks some, new harvest
for jars for jam for family for
ritual becoming back
to reacquaint herself after a summer away
a jam jar offering
a few blue cushions
between thumb and forefinger

stripped clusters at a time
she can cook in the big pot

she picks in the clearing behind the cabin
belongs to some bears, lynx, the occasional moose
a lot of spruce and birch
to another Crown
to people who lived here once
in these hills and ran their own economies
to someone else when she is no longer employed
sparrows and sometimes the sandhill cranes
visit this hump of razed forest
belongs to eight points of the compass
is a wildered separate
which the fire tower windows point at

she would focus on the berries
submerge identity politics into blue compote
a smear on her tongue, roof of her mouth livid
small seeds a rough contents
do not answer to anyone
roll and split between teeth

I is in the feminine
a mixed middle economy
chooses when to fast is wealth
a daughter of, sister to
three sisters, roly girl child olive skin
third generation Euro-immigrant
the aunt to one niece one nephew
a feral woman flirting
remembers kisses and press
sometimes bodies mingle
a witness for The Crown vs. your assailant
the pink slip means I had a job, and then didn't
and how was I going to pay for myself
writing
a poem
and nurturing that, so picks the blueberries

you are them a wildered separate
 would immerse yourself in the task
 berries for jam for family for
 ritual becoming back
 to reacquaint yourself after a summer away
 a jam jar offering
 it's a plan

The berries burn. You have been not attentive. The smell alerts you first, to how bad it is. Scrape the jam back exposes a black crust on the pot and now it's all mixed up. The burnt with the pulp. Beyond separating. Tastes all of it burnt, unforgiving. A flavour the honey doesn't hide. The sterile jar for it, for not. All for not. Accumulation of effort, steadfastness, for not. Just leave it on the table. Later, clean it up later. It's a waste. It's even a crime against the crowns. Taken, and burnt. No attention. Who raised you anyway, that you can't do better. What happened to you that you aren't better at this. Aren't you better yet, after all that therapy. It's a good strategy, to be better, not let him get to you. Fight. Be attentive. Which you weren't. They weren't even your berries to begin with. Belong to the compass, winter's rot. Stealing them is bad enough. Though if you had paid in attention.

Just leave the pot. Later, deal with mind's tapes, the pot, later. Go outside the cabin, ambition, the structures.

As you leave you spoon a bitter taste discover livid salve. Pot's black is also sweet. Spoon some more not so bad actually. You know where it's been, what it's made up of. Another heaping spoonful, fruit thick. Jam doesn't have to translate. Berries just for herself, doesn't have to translate. Weight of the task lifts. The whole burnt sweet pot could just be for you took time on the step slowing to that.