

# We Became Summer

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## Passion Sunday

Furtively, I watch him wipe  
blood from tracks on his arm  
before I leave for Palm Sunday Mass.

He swore he didn't—only pot,  
which he grows in a closet.  
Still. Leaving wasn't going to be easy.

We were engaged. I finally got  
someone I had wanted  
but the desire was dated.

Ten years ago, he was a hot  
musician, in demand by bands  
and a slew of gals.

Now he's a trust fund baby  
in night school and I'm a  
half orphaned child-woman

coming to terms with loss,  
family, writing.  
I want to jump off this cross.

## When in Italy

Feel beautiful in Rome.  
Grab a bike and get happy in Ferrara,  
the planned Renaissance city  
where people travel by cycle  
'round ancient walls and along the Po.

Retrace Joyce's steps in Trieste,  
and feel the splash of the Adriatic's far north reach.  
Work hard in Milan  
where serious Italians operate on Swiss time.

Greet my cousins in Teramo  
where hills shrouded in gold  
harbor lambs and mushrooms.

Get mystic in Ravenna  
where East meets West  
and Byzantine mosaics adorn  
centuries' old cathedrals.

Uncover Italy's true masterpieces in Positano—  
sea and sky and rock,  
the big hole in the mountain

that resembles, well, anatomy,  
and then indulge in heaping  
plates of *spaghetti con vongole*.  
Pledge to stay forever and never go back.

## Bahia Beats

Percussionist Davi Vieira speaks all languages  
in the tongue of drums, triangle, jazzy castanets,  
a set of bells that hangs from his mic.

He seduces fans with his thumping hands.  
We respond to his Bahia beats  
with hips and feet.

Can't hide the heat.  
Swaying to his fast *forro*  
strains from Northeast Brazil.

Sundays at 9 at Club Bonafide on East 52<sup>nd</sup> Street.  
Fellow Brazilians on guitar, bass,  
fiery red Yamaha drums.

Blame it on Salvador, home of Davi,  
storyteller Jorge Amado, and  
Africans who hit the shores in the 1500s,

where the Atlantic's thrashing waves are wildest.  
He sings "Caipirinha" and I could order another  
but the music gets me plenty high.

Dancing to samba.  
Serenaded by songs and laughter and his bright smile.  
The best moves all down below.

Luisa plays on a Flying V violin,  
swings like she never has before.  
Davi can't hide his joy at

tantalizing fans wrapped in a trance,  
like worshippers of Candomblé, the religion of Brazil.  
Capped with a checkered green hat, he prances on stage.

The club manager takes to the floor.  
Midnight strikes too soon.

## Lessons Learned from Moths

I learned the art of detachment  
from a destructive pest  
romanticized by poets  
whose origins go back millions of years.

Celestial nomads that feast on  
leather, wool, silk, felt  
and thrive on night  
taught me to let go of longing—

animals stuffed with memories,  
dolls from a distant dad,  
an embroidered coat from Gimbels.  
When I returned to my late mother's home,

white larvae covered elegant outfits.  
Soles fell from Ferragamo pumps.  
Moths cunningly coached me to occupy now,  
not dwell in closets lined with past lives

nor focus on nostalgia  
tarnished by death and deceit.

## **We Became Summer**

Long before we needed protection,  
we formed tribes and picked a chief.  
First-borns have a knack for stirring idolatry.

Bike rides energized us on innocent mornings.  
The sun perfumed our fresh skin,  
before self-awareness replaced laughter  
and possession replaced play.

At dusk, seduction set in.  
Bruises faded and mosquitoes fled.  
Lightning bugs appeared, as beer-soaked dads

threw teen neighbors into backyard swimming pools  
and we invited boys into the playhouse shed,  
before ennui replaced embracing fear of the unknown.