

Wilderness House Literary Review 3/1

Sharmagne Leland-St.John

I Said Coffee

I said coffee
I didn't say,
"would you
like to cup
my warm
soft breasts
in your
un-calloused,
long,
tapered,
ringless fingered
hands?"

I said coffee
I didn't say,
"would you
like to
run your tongue
along my neck
just below
my left ear-lobe?"

I said coffee
I didn't say,
"would you
like to
hold me
in your arms
and feel my heart
skip beats
as you press your
hard, lean body
up against mine
until I melt
into you
with desire?"

I said coffee
as we stood there

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in the jasmine
scented night
my car door
like some modern day
bundling board
separating us,
protecting us
from ourselves
and lust

I said,
"would you
like to go for
a cup of coffee?"
I didn't say,
"would you
like to brush
your lips
across mine
as you move
silently
to bury your face
in my long, silky,
raven black hair?"

But you said,
"I can't
I'm married
I can't trust myself
to be alone
with you."
So I looked you
dead in the eye
and repeated
"I said coffee"

Snug Harbour

She reminded me of Snug Harbour
Perfectly starched white shorts
Thin gold chains from Tiffany
Worn on aristocratic ankles
Below shapely suntanned calves
The exotic, erotic scent of Bain de Soleil
Sailboats dotting a ginger horizon
Adirondack chairs with chintz cushions
Displaying huge floral prints
And banana leaves.

She reminded me of Nancy Drew
And Ned Nickerson in his white linen trousers
And Panama hat
Arrow shirt sleeves rolled up
Lobster bakes at eventide
And campfires 'til midnight
Slow dancing in the headlights
Of a baby-blue convertible roadster
Then snuggling in the back
Under a plaid lap robe
Stolen kisses

Strawberries and champagne,
Cucumber sandwiches at the regatta
Country clubs and trips abroad
Belgian chocolate
Cut flowers in a cut crystal vase
In the foyer
Radcliffe or Wellesley in the fall
Heirloom diamond engagement rings
>From a fourth generation
Harvard undergraduate law student
Weekends with his family in the Hamptons
Tennis

She said I reminded her of Coney Island.

There Were Dry Red Days

There were dry red days
Devoid of clouds
Devoid of breeze
Sound bruised
My burning bones
Dirt cracked my hands
And caked my cheeks
No buds on limbs of trees
No birds on branches
No hope of rain
Scrawny chickens
Kicked up dust
Scratching for food
That wasn't there
In the stifling, stillness
Of the scorched night
We dreamt
Of cool oases
Tropical isles
Emerald bays
Not these dry red days