

1999 POEMS

All In A Bottle Of Wine

David Swanson

Love has it, the ring that binds our love
rests quietly at the bottom of a bottle of wine.

So, maybe it does no good to wonder
still over a bottle of wine I might
find myself drifting in and out of conversations
with family and friends
and gaze out beyond the napkins wrinkled on the table
to the hills rolling after sunset
curving gently like my lover asleep
the sky turning deepest blue
mulling again the secrets of those in love.

Wondering
will love unbound grow wild
like vines untrained
and coarse as a crow's caw
scratching the dawn?

And does the fruit of such love
grow sour and scarce?

We had been married for several months
when we joined up with a party on its way out of town.
Leaving the valley that morning,
we made our way up into the hills for lunch
and stopped at a winery whose owners we knew.
It was late in the fall and the vines were turning.
Juices from red grapes sat in tubs,
their skins still soaking in them.
The winemaker greeted us kindly.
He said he was just making ready

to press the last of his juice.
So, I and another agreed to help him
while the rest of the party prepared lunch.

In that region you can smell the arrival of fall
on one certain morning
it is unmistakable
the bare soil from beneath the vines
quietly exhales
and this breath remains
until the rains drive it away.

I wore a wedding band then,
although I still had not grown
accustomed to it

.
Nor did it quite fit.
I borrowed a pair of boots
and rolled up my sleeves
and set to work.

The juice was dark and sweet
beneath the skins
and without a second thought
I plunged my hands deep within.

With its strong scent blending with the breath of fall,
skins between my fingers,
and stains on my wrists,
I never noticed when it made off with my ring.

We pressed the juice
and stored it in a tank.
And after lunch
we sorted through the empty raisins
on the winery floor
until late into the afternoon.

Before our party headed back to the valley
we had spread the raisins
across the soil beneath the vines.
And I walked down the rows
in the weakening sunlight
looking for a glimmer of gold
beneath the circling crows.

So, maybe it does no good to wonder
whether love is or is not
like wine.
But deep into a bottle
I might.

Could the best wine not come from a wild vine?

Over dessert and a new round of toasts
the laughter of kinship and friendship
spirits being so high
how is it that I
again as always
am drawn to her beauty
in the candlelight
wanting her company alone.

But, I believe one morning we will wake
to a golden throated crow calling our names.

Until Our Glasses Meet Again

John Dooley

Lush solutions, the refinement of rubies
Garnet lace on crystal tulip
Bush thighs of August sunset

Perception curves
to the taste of ebony fruit clusters
brushing along
sensation aromas
The glorious harvest of our seasons

Without which
we are deadlocked in durance vile
No longer ride the whirlwind
and direct the storms

Stradivarius vines with enchanted
black passion
fragrance decanted
rhyme water trilling

among undisturbed pillars of ivory
wheat and blade
We yield to embrace these sanguine day meadows
The wondrous bouquet of lovers' hope

This bottle
this glass
this memory
will last
as true love lasts

We want to soar encoupled
Spread sail and flutter
To imbibe this delicious fruit
as we lift from precious earth
and glide far away
where intimate winds
engage in eternity

Ancient Art

Marts E. Beekley

Dirt of The Earth
Feather of The Bird
Crust of The Lady Bug
Web of The Spider
Kiss of The Bee
Sweat and shadow of The Master
Sun and Rain from God
Bloom of The Grape Skin
Juice from The Heart of the Berry
Sweetness of Oak
Chamber of The Bottle
They call it Wine

Art's Opus

Marcia S. Matz

There was a young lad from Rock Island,
Who schooled at SC - but no band.
Pre-med, he found bland,
It was missing a gland,
But in architecture he found he was grand.

He married a damsel named Bunnie.
Their days together were sunny.
With their son Judd, they moved
Up North, what a change,
To make great wine and some money.

They started up Whitehall Lane.
With Alan and Char, in the main.
He won many awards,
And attracted the hordes,
But eventually found it a pain.

So up to Judd's Hill they did tottle.
To a chapel so lovely and subtle.
They work day and night,
But oy-vey, what a sight.
The eagles and heron and bottle.

Now, Art's wine is a poem - 'tis true.
And its renown deservedly grew.
It's bliss on the tongue,
And the nose does delight
While the color is truly a jewel.

This poem may be horrid and long.
But be sure not to get me wrong.
The story's the truth,
And the wine - through the roof!
Next year, inspiring a song.

It's a Dog's Wine

Richard Paul Hinkle

Here we have sanitation
To keep the germs at bay
But across the wide Atlantic
They live a better way.

There's Frenchy at his bistro
On the hearth a burning log
"Some Gevrey avec mon rôti," he sang
"And a little Beaune for my dog."

Mistress Vine

Paolo Blystone

in softening light
of a blue moon night
I hear whispers,
.....almost a silence,
elixirs
...striving for release

and suddenly,
behind my eyes....
I see where beauty abides,
in vineyards,
waiting for light
.....in darkness
unnoticed

grapes,
like mistresses;
beckoning for sweets,
each breath
a tear.....
growing tenderly

innocent lovers;
lingering
and unhurried,
revealing,
one peeling
at a time,
tinctures
.....struggling for purchase

in a starry velvet night,
yields a harvest
of dreams
.....seeming so real,

bewitched by love
unfurling, tantalizing,infusing
plushy ink
to my veins

Mustard Memories

Bob Bergman

Between the rows of sleeping vines
some sunshine grows to wake the vines.
Waves of yellow on beds of green;
fields once fallow now snapshot scenes.

Mighty Mustard with your own fest.
Chefs all flustered to flaunt their best.
Art and music also flower.
Front-page news pics prove your power.

Too soon you're gone. The vines awake.
Fresh rows are drawn by disks that rake.
It's time to prine; it's time to weed.
Your fruit's a boon that helps to feed.

And even though edge blooms may last,
you seem to know that fame fades fast.
Sleep late, sleep late 'til next year's rain.
And wait, and wait 'til next year's reign.

Untitled

Gregg Wenger

Bill Evans jazzed a piano divine
And Shakespeare rhymed an inspired line.
Splashed paint? Go Van Gogh.
But for Cab and Merlot
Stick with Bunnie and Art Finkelstein.

Untitled

Wendy Day-Kite

Merlot stains my hands
Yellow jackets search for food
The harvest is on

Untitled

Helen Goodman

A glass of wine a day
Will keep the doctor away!

A glass of wine
Goes right to the heart.

And counters a problem
Before it starts

The AMA, NIH, FDA,
And you and I agree.

Drink a glass of Judd's Hill a day
And healthy and happy you'll be!

Vinum

M. Fiscus

Are we so alone in this fragile frame,
Alone yet brave enough to look about.
We see things fail and are rack'd with shame,
Like flutes our insides have been hollowed out.
Or like poor Hamlet, we see loved ones fade,

And so we grip the table in our pain.
There returns no answer to prayers we've made,
We feel no paradise to be regained.
Yet deep within us there resides a light,
Whose source belies our imagination;
It insists we take the nobler plight
And find treasures of our own creation.
In this fertile realm, God and man converge
And pry from the rock a form so sublime.
From this fecund earth a gift will emerge;
A winking brim freed from the tangled vine.
This abundant grape embraces our heart
As we twist and curl with God, man, and art.