

RED DIAMOND

Katharyn Howd Machan

Fox likes to drink that wine.
It's the same color as the edge of her tongue
after she's dined on certain rabbits
bred just for her in that potting shed
with its cunning little green roof.
Fox prefers a thin-stemmed glass
etched with initials half an inch tall;
she found it at the Salvation Army
alone on a metal shelf. Sometimes
she offers wine to friends, but Red Diamond
she keeps for herself. Not all riches
should be shared with the world: this one
Fox drinks to her own health.

after Norman Mailer

A SNAKE CAN'T STRIKE IN A BOX

Katharyn Howd Machan

it's a fine wine
though the Devil might have
shit in it

Fox muses over this
strange folk expression
and vineyards she has roamed

the one where a serpent
encircled a trellis
just waiting for bare feet to pass:

Fox's brother had lifted
a rake with sharp teeth
and shredded that villain to blood

growers' red
grapes still glistening
towards a sweet upended flask

A SLOW BOTTLE OF WINE

Katharyn Howd Machan

he taught me how to drink
a slow bottle of wine
how to make it last
a whole purple afternoon
the fullness lingering
bright and mellow on the tongue

France in August is a field
of lavender gone crazy blue
in need of harvest but not
ready for the sharpened blade
to cut the source of blossom
Oh how the music calls

bamboo forest makes a cool tall
place where stories happen
in the garden of the lotus
a green pool awaits
wishes from new lips
that promise love *love*

midnight in Monoblet: sound
of paper streamers tearing
C'est la fete! C'est la fete!
all of summer seeming
one long walk to a parked car
black laughing eyes demanding

golden ring legal promise of forever
tossed into a fountain of hard dreams:
marriage fades to fog in this
new landscape of long sun
white rocks along cool riverbank
all the boundaries a heart wants

goats clanking copper bells the Monday
market with bright earrings in the shape
of ripened grapes pale castle gleaming
on the mountain in our view
from shuttered windows: how to know
what moments will determine who we are?
I had his baby and the months
of not forgetting southern sun
adultery a promise far beyond

mind's comprehension *oh the fountain*
with the face of Pan pretending
all is now and ever can be frantic dance

a slow bottle of wine I tell you
seems the life and is the life
in love where a woman wanders
full of wanting free of time
all her years the taste of summer
rising with his name

Your Place

Kelsey McMurtrey

I watch your wandering eyes at the white table,
searching the bottom of your swirling goblet.

Lost in a sea of dark mauve,
you are not in this place.

You are far away,
in the vineyard of your youth.

Snatching succulent grapes off
drooping emerald vines,
the fallen fruits bursting under your bare feet.

The sun is heavy and warm on your back,
but you feel no weight.

You run up and down the rows,
stopping at dusk to lean your tired body against the thick vines.

They wrap you in their fragrant embrace,
and you are home.

Hi Ho, Hi Ho a Vintner's Life for Me

Helga Elisabeth Schauer-Mayrbäurl

At a tavern in Frisco, as it would be, a hatchway and “Mickey” put me to sea.

Gathered me sea legs, and thus came to be, sailin the fortunes of freebootery.

The vessel is pitched and rolled with the wake; twas clear that the cargo an average would take.

I got in a tussle wit pirate McKee, then jumped from the plank, out into the Sea.

A barrel afloat fluked up alongside, as I held on an spiked it, to me surprise,
a dark cherry vintage shot into me eyes.

That brew made me giddy, dulled all me sores, an after a fortnight buoyed me to shores.

Stumblin and singin I run through the grass, and landed in Napa a holdin a glass.

Some say twas the Irish wit luck they me blessed, I say that the girlie, who took me, was best.

So when yee read “Judd’s Hill” be knowin this Salt, a Vintner twas Shangaied is makin yee halt.

Poetry in Red

Jodi L. Hottel

Liquid rubies slip
past lips, glowing: passion
cradled in a glass.

Like Wine Like Woman

Danielle Pouliot

"Oh yes," he says, "like woman, like wine.

The legs tell the story."

Of sun-clad skies and drought-brought doubt,

of ululating ullage,

and vine-entangled village,

The legs tell the story.

Breezes lapping at bedsheets on laundry lines,

and visiting relatives

leisurely leg-crossing in *chaises longues*.

Reminisce

while gently sipping summer days.

Fermented memories -- the bitter, the sweet --

are a-twirl in a wineglass like

figures in a snow globe.

"Oh, yes," she agrees, "like wine, like woman.

The legs tell the story, and the men

listen closely."

An Invitation

Edgar Calvelo

When you come in December
vineyard's harvest will be fermenting
the valley, a scented temple, approaching
oenophiles place palms together and bow.

When you come in December
the weather may be cool or raining
fields and hill silent with colors
barrels shivering in the caves.

Imagine a place where jewels
shatter into thousand flirtations
where you can shape your lips with feelings
swirl poetry with wine.

When you come
you will find life filled with stories,
you can experience infinity
and your first love.

A Visit

Edgar Calvelo

A good friend once taught me
Simple things like awareness
To carry a camera when I go out
How to be polite
There are no ordinary afternoons.

And things to ponder:
His awe of how wine comes into being
How simple exchange of elements
Can give life to a vine
Blossom into complexity.

One day I visited the valley
Toured the vineyards, tasted
Many varietals, red and white
Took photos of a hundred memories
Kindness, landscape, friendship.

The night before my departure, I attended
Dinner with the winemaker
I found a vintage that held my attention
Harmonious leap above all the others
A measure of greatness, maybe?

Enjoying Wine

Christopher D. Sims

I enjoy wine wetting the
tip of my tongue, opening
new taste buds. My appreciation
turns to love as I indulge, enjoy,
embark.

Wine tasting is an art. It is as
sophisticated as jazz. Beer?! Sorry
bartender I will pass!

Alone with one bottle, whether
red or white wine, it is always
the right time to unwind with
that savory drink.

We wine lovers enjoy ourselves.
We are philosophers and thinkers.
We are calm, content. Imagine a
stadium full of wine drinkers!

Stories we tell over zinfandel;
Hugs and delights over bottles
of Merlot; Many a good time
with wine fortified.

What cannot be denied are
Mellow moments after work
When all things come crashing
down, you seem to be annoyed
by every sound, and you are
feeling empty inside. What's
there to help?

A crisp, fresh full-bodied wine.

Let us rejoice as we sip, experience,
embrace, envelop the liquid of the
gods that's been here for ages, years.
Cheers!

Perfect Pairing

Barb Herrmann

I muse as I pour
Mind eager to explore
Intrigued by personal metaphor

An inextricable pair
Entwined survive, thrive
Released come alive

Ancient gnarled vines grew you
Deep-rooted family tree...me
Umbilical
Ever cyclical

Once plump clusters in sunlight basking
Succulent, full of promise, asking
What will I be?
What possibilities?

Potential unknown
Matured, aged, grown
Come into our own

Prime, sublime
Time for the world to see
Our richness, balance
Complexity

Savor you
Savor me

Untitled Haiku

Allyson Whipple

lips sip wine
mosquitos drink blood
juicy. summer.

THE IMPENETRABLE PIRATE SCIENCE OF GETTING SQUIFFY

Rows of ripe hogsheads stacked deep in the womb
jostle with the roughening sea
swollen oaken bellies awash in embryonic ferment
dank brigs hold foaming indigo broth

courtesy of an unwary Huguenot
fooking fool
heeding not our promise of plunder

Now salty lips strain impossibly
spitting terrible oaths
piteous shrieks, mournful wails
walkers of planks whispering hoarse entreaties

besotted, seduced, comatose
succumbed by dizzy juice;
we ravage entirely resistable sirens

Deck timbers groaning with bright ballast
offer one last taste of grapey ink
to parched ghosts
drowning in wretched obedience

True pirates arise, your night is at hand
the wine dark sea is your blood to drink
and spill

Arrgh!



Win the Pirate

Win Minter

The symbiosis of poetry going with wine ~
It's a brilliant idea; it suits me just fine!
So I grabbed up a pencil,
And wrote my first line ...

"The Wine-taster's Experience"

See the grapes hanging heavy all out on the vines,
Soon they'll be made into excellent wines.
They'll go through the harvest and then through the crush,
Where they'll turn to a red wine or a white or a blush.

The guests will all gather through the tasting-room door,
Excited and eager to have their first pour!
They'll head for the bar and all take their place,
As they chitchat in earnest; a grin on each face.

Like a dancer, "Nice legs!" "Oh look how it twirls!"
"Hold it up to the light and see how it swirls!"
The poets express themselves well, not in prose,
"Oh my, does this wine have an excellent nose!"

And heard with each clink of a glass on the bar:
"I really think this year's is way up to par!"
"I'll buy up a bottle or two or a case!"
"There's no doubt about it ah'm lovin' this place!"

Mary Richardson
October 31st, 2013