

KRISTEN MARIE BYERS



A COLLECTION OF POEMS

IN M

Mexico

The sun throbs low in Mérida
The scent of beer floats in the air
And dogs are running wild
In the streets.

At Los Aluxes no one leaves
Without a sun-kissed freckled face
Or sand from beaches washed here
By the sea.

The heat absorbed by blood-red dirt
And bars lined up down every strip
Beg visitors to stay and
Have a drink.

I'm sipping on my martini
And you are drinking Dos Equis
While lovers spin a web dress
On the floor.

Deceit knows you are nothing new
And I am just an old friend, too
So I ask you to dance now
In your sleep.

martini

There at the bar you are
Sipping on your cigar
Inhale then exhale, the
Sweet smoke entices you
Taunting you telling you,
You can't go anywhere
You can't be anyone.

I'm pouring drinks while I
Ponder your worn out eyes:
Figuring out what is
Different about your face.
Something inside of you
Wants nothing more than to
Take no one home tonight.
Looking at me with this
Mournful gaze on your brow;
Sinewy frame with the
Lingering scent of your

Cigarette on the air.
Dying inside (something's
Living behind your eyes.)

mirror

In the bathroom washing my hands
(Erasing the stench of bourbon and gin)
Standing at the sink next to mine
Her name is Kelly, I think.
Looking in the mirror, pursing
Her lips, admiring her nipples
Clad only in a transparent top.

She works across the street, I think.
At the nightclub where girls bare
Their breasts
(And their toes and everything in between).

Too young to work there, I think.
Probably not even eighteen
Her eyes are on fire;
She pours white fire on the counter.

The man
At the bar
The one
Not much older than me
He's dying, I think.
(I could see it in his eyes).

mermaid

My eyes are dilated
The pupils darting along
My cheeks.

My hair is sweltering
The wild strands covering
My face.

My clavicle is sharp
The bones threatening to burst
My chest.

My navel is guileful

The depths collapsing into
My abs.

My tattoo is alive
The ink slithering across
My hips.

maison

You were there in Eden
When we ate the apple
Long brown hair and lashes;
Naked and ashamed.

Sashay, dance, and sway
Breasts and hips are moving
Standing on the scaffold;
Naked and ashamed.

Shimmy with the pole snake
Legs entangled thickly
Dancing with your eyes closed;
Naked and ashamed.

Selfish lust directs you
Pulling Adam skinless
Both bewildered spellbound;
Naked and ashamed.

Eat forbidden fruit pits
Dribble juice down ivory
Thrown out of the garden;
Naked and ashamed.

Falling down the Hell holes
Bottomless enticements
Broken down and withered;
Naked and ashamed.

mosaic

The man with the lucid eyes still sits at the bar
He's dying, I think.
I can see it in his eyes:
Syringes and sodomy
The layers and the dimensions
Bending and folding like a kaleidoscope.

Bodies blending together,
Twisting in the dark.
Twisting, turning...
Erotic oblivion?

Blinking
For a moment his
Eyes are diaphanous
Flickering dreams of the daylight.

Flutter glitter glimpse glimmer;
Scintillating from beyond
Twilight.

martyr

Sure that she can see it
Too ashamed to meet her gaze
Eyes dimly lit
Searching for exits in the smoky haze.

She sees the malady
Inside my veins
I stare into my Long Island iced tea,
Examine her high-heeled Mary Janes.

She slides a drink across the counter
Winks, "This one is on the house"
She whispers to the bouncer
Quiet as a vesper mouse.

Unsure of what was said
All my well-kept secrets
Emerged from under the bed
Pulled along by escorts.

This disease is the cross that I bear
As it is pondered by this seductive brunette
And so this drink we shall share
After my journey to Mount Olivet.