

PCB JAM

the spraying is over for another year
but its residue coils in a dusty haze
around the fields
while in careless idyll of summer heat
the wheat glimmers tall as the sticky boys
who amble through to the hedgerows for their gold

picking blackberries that day
they forget for one moment their undone chores
as in a fervour of brambles and sun
their minds and their buckets and mouths fill instead
with the image and fact of the warm bleeding fruit

at last they are done
lips and fingers purple with accomplishment
through the lush ripeness of familiar lanes
they make their way home

—see Mrs Burgess
look what we have
look what we found round by Archer's field
pounds of the stuff just dripping from bushes
spilling from hedges and into our hands—

dusk-lazy laughter
drifts down the bower of their neighbour's old tree
to catch on late blossom and echo with evening perfume

curled up inside them their little death lies
poisonous
ready to strike come the autumn
after the bountiful chemical summer

Lynne Kositsky

This poem won the 1979 E.J. Pratt award for poetry at the University of Toronto



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