

(girls in their summer dresses)

by Jerry Ratch

The life, the burning up that works up our loveliness, hot under the surface that is tempted to show forth its parts after being confined, enclosed, shut in. Beautiful honey-water sliding out of long bleak skies, after all the howling of our legendary youth, reading out its demands, its chain of inner truths.

Large stones standing nearby were by no means the only reality. We were innocent of the history of the north winds, or of the neglect which somehow caused this strange sense of inner peacefulness, though no one now understands how or why.

You were the only one at the time that seemed to know how, so I would have lain down underneath you forever, if you wanted me to. Now I know why you did not. Only I could have known. But I, of course, said nothing, and have regretted it ever since. I who knew everything about you.

Maybe my heart was up already with that light shining straight out of my eyes. Girls in their summer dresses competing for your attention. Cleavage, legs, new skin, with the light down travelling underneath our clothing. Youth, in which the spoken country bathes. Time enough later for the meadows of regret that might come. It was summertime, and the new flesh was blooming along the thoroughfares.

I was the first one to sing from those shores for you, and from the middle of the river too, shining in the distilled night, with starlight in my hair and on my body. And when you left, I sat by the waters, calling your name. Nearby sat a god, who toasted me a drink to your health, while the west wind approached from the west.

And now a thousand gods buzz around the sun, while the wind acquires its name and flowers stand under it, following the future to its utter source.

