Bright Red

by Kurt Facknitz

Bright Red

The stars danced up there
Across some lonely ring of dust
Light years from the earth.
She was a beautiful girl, but still so young.
I met her under blinking red in winter in Detroit.

It was *revolution*;
An uprising manufactured
on the wrong side of a dime.
'Separation Anxiety'.
Little girls whaling in the grass by Woodward Avenue,
Waiting for their fathers to come back from the war.

It was a *Riot*:
A bunch of boys flipping cars,
Breaking windows, setting fire and making love.
They called the cavalry. Exquisite specimens.
Professionals at propaganda.

A cloud of smoke
[set against the emptiness of space] obscured the sun.
Her brown eyes dipped behind some spiral castle
Made of pieces that they gathered from the other wars they'd won.
Every brick gleamed bright red.

They wore all sorts of colors in the hills:
dark green bandana's, orange beads,
and blue to complement
(like grunge guitar and jazz trombone,

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or Sodium and water)

But the trains stopped coming,
And a thousand bits of glass were left to till the sand.
It was over long before the 'riot',
Before the yellow monsters came
To take their homes.

She played guitar.
Her calloused fingers fought hard against those strings.
We made a home at the river basin
Under crystal mountains,
Waiting for the rain.

The vines entwined the charred remains of stone
And broken bottles of Sangria.
The glass wept crimson,
but the mud disguised the color.
Only hungry hearts could taste the liquor.

Some boys shed their homes and headed north.
Those left worked in plumes of ash
And pools of gasoline.
They shoveled coal into the furnace of the city,
So the ghosts would be warm for their haunting.

The sun was high when the soldiers came.
And the leaves were falling softly to the surface of the water.
They drew their bows of fire,
But we would not retreat.
The fire burned bright red.