Wedding Poem (for a sister at marriage)

Jason Snart
College of DuPage

Follow this and additional works at: https://dc.cod.edu/plr

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://dc.cod.edu/plr/vol25/iss2/68
Wedding Poem *(for a sister at marriage)*

By Jason Snart

I.

Images ensconced in memory. Not like images on a movie screen
But like those blurs, and scuffs, and scars that share the screen
Those intangible, intractable, unintelligent marks,
Those remains of wear that we look past
To the action and actors, unfolding like a dream.

These scuffs are the ones I carry-a suitcase-do you remember
A leaden pencil mark of road, shivering in the summer sun
straight as the architect's line, from our small world
to another small world, territory provinces wide
From Alberta to Manitoba; such places names, though, were the province

Of adult minds; what we knew was the prairie of the backseat
Two packages of felt markers, a Sony walkman, papers, napkins, sunglasses,
The colors blue, red, black or green, I think,
an invisible wall that could make us voiceless
And yet pretending to smoke the felt markers, yes, like cigarettes

Speaking a language we pretended was French; how exotic,
Our sheltered clutch on the highway became some salon,
some café, which must have been, not a far memory,
But a distant projection, as we would travel separately to Paris
And speak French, the real French, to those who cared, or didn't care.

Were there secrets we spoke in our un-language
too secret for anyone else to know, too secret even
to be spoken, to be admitted. Something deciphered later, but
still unspoken. Something like, "I'm glad
you are with me in this car, traveling to Dauphin and Carberry, to play
with old toys, and watch old people we love and misunderstand."

II.

You might think I would be charged at the battery of language,
Having a degree, and all, in language; but by degrees,
language and I have fallen off, a trail separation; language, I hear,
is doing fine, meeting new people, traveling, hitting the town, drunk
and loud on its newfound excitability. This is what I hear, at any rate.
So I've struggled, of course, missing the words that seemed, at one point,
So easy, like a language you could invent with a best friend,
Like a fountain pen was really a fountain, and like to write was just
to live wildly and report on what happens. I've struggled

with what a speech like this would look like, sound like, feel like
unfolding before you, as we might unfold a map and point to this,
that, and the other; but this map, this language,
is a poor map, poor language, overused in circling around the unspoken
and roads have disappeared in worn out creases,
proper folds and improper folds; places submerged in spilled coffee.

But I think you might recognize some of this;
at least the rough basement that worlds build
as they build us and collect us in our own recollection.
Remember this, then, as what will become future memory.
Remember to say, now, I love you, I care for you, I appreciate you,
I need you, I watch you, I hear you, to all the people
who are woven together as a text and a textile,
a fabric you might, some wintry third-floor night, pull around you-
it will become a warm ocean of memories.

III.

Trespasses, disbelief, mistrust, and jealousy,
Anger, forgiveness, fear and joy. Revelation
Like a shattering windshield; these are the creatures that shuffle
Through our sinew and bones; in the bruised heart,
in the gut, in the place before languages, before sight.
What happens to these untold stories, these pieces of glass?
They become

wishes, wished in aspirations that sound
like wind through the palmettos, like an ocean
against the coast, or a pine tree
outside your window; the old poplars and elms
are centuries in a grand history of backyards. A wish
for love and happiness and for all the creatures
whose voiceless shuffling ties our bodies together.

If you are in a far place, under a constant, grand-motherly moon
hear this wish in the sound of wind across the prairie of wheat
that will always be our home. See it bend in the gesture
of giving and listening and prayer.