

puerto rican discovery number 44, wildflowers
for magdalena gómez

on the amtrak to springfield in june,
those wildflowers that grow
where no one can see them
blossoming in all their fiery splendor,
for whom does their beauty persist?

their brilliant oranges like songs to the sun
on hills that hide off the side of the road
or near riverbanks where leisure boats rest
in their affluent docks,
do these earthly delights grow for them?

clusters of daisies, day lilies, purple and pink azaleas
sprout from cracks between rock slabs thrust from the earth.
was this amtrak's careful landscaping
or nature's casual abundance?
primroses, sundrops, sweet peppers and hemlocks
dogwoods, wintergreens, shinleaf and prince's pines
indian pipe, beechdrops, mayflowers and pinksters
in luscious greenery that clothes the majesty of summer
like offerings to cloud spirits on the alter of spring

by water towers, railroad tracks, grain silos and farmlands
within dense forests, open fields, tennis courts and backyards
under billboards, bridges, fences, and power lines
near shopping malls, family homes, lumber yards and parking lots
mountain laurels, labradors, huckleberry and calico
cassandra, rosemary, cranberries and checkerberries

along churches, shipping ports, dance halls and graffiti walls
against saw mills, wishing wells, station houses and city parks
in the company of willows, woodlands, wetlands and truck stops
cows grazing and horses romping
swamp candles, lambkills, loosestrife and blueweeds
creeping and fringed, tufted and narrow-leaved

greenness thrives from every space of ground
silver and maroon wealth of weeds and vines
in between dancing twin butterflies, lavenders and chickweeds
mosses and mushrooms finding their way
fungus and flora following their secret calendars
silently hidden in perfectly timed feasts

spontaneous branches reaching upwards and outwards
in a brotherhood of life
growing and dying in cycles of returning
unable to confine the fullness of their being
with their nesting and hoarding
their pollinating and harvesting
home to bird families, squirrels, insects and amphibians
tender roots peeking out from the mortar crevices of bricks
in defiance that refuses to follow regulations
and rules of containment.

something happens in my eyes
and beyond seeing
in the midst of these intertwining forms
leafy, random and carefree in their fractal infinities,
some part of my soul is refreshed,
renewed like the moist earth after the rain.

all this beauty, i think,
this buffet of earth greening, so precious,
these gifts, here for me, for each of us.
and my spirit settles as i breathe
and know that i am alive.

© 2009 sandra maría esteves, *new and selected poems*