

Nancy Anne Miller

Boiling Hot

She rubs the silver pot, with
Gorham's polish as if her genie
were inside, would waft out from
the steam island tea makes

in such a humid climate. Prepares
triangle sandwiches, lops off
dark crusts that heap on the kitchen
counter as if caterpillars crawled out

from frilly lettuce leaves, like sea's
wavy rim, the silk cap sleeves on
smocked dresses made for the misses.
Arranges a square like the cross

intersection of the Amen Corner in Paget,
a treacherous passage through.
Dons white gloves used for church
and to serve among the fair English.

Watches their skin turn earth brown,
the harsh light claiming a geography
of persons the empire sent across
the world. The British sunrise on

every commoner's door back in
London, an unblinking watchful eye,
a fan spread wide open to
cool down boiling hot countries.

Buoy

If you are going to leave your island,
better do it on a ship, where you see
the water between the dock and your
liner extend into the crease of waves,

open like an accordion. Feel your
heart roll back, forth, a buoy tethered to
the wharf. If you must leave your country,
better a seaborne way, the tilt of

swells rocks you inconsolable, like
in a nanny's crib. Better than by
plane where through a tiny window
like your diving mask of youth, the hook

isle drops away, the sinker you watched
disappear into harbour waters when
you fished off Paget Ferry. Better
a boat that stole many an ancestor into

the blue, so when you pour the sludge
of Earl Grey from a silver teapot like
muddy water from an elephant trunk,
it holds all memories that slosh inside, still.

Antique Star Map

Round as a crystal ball,
one might turn to find a path,
hold in one's hand, cup
a drop in the ocean. This one

has a star in the middle, like
a Bermuda Sand Dollar, I
would find on Coral Beach,
the tides washed over, spent.

A pin cushion where precise
points prick the dark. A child's
circle of marbles, large planets
knock out smaller ones: taws

hit peewees. The nineteenth century
one is full of flying figures, a Sistine
Chapel for ship captains, where one
looks up to feel the muscle of

myths ripple the heavens.
Capricorn's bow and arrow,
a shipmate's sextant used to negotiate
the skies, to find a seaworthy mark.

Unsmiling

Swimmers bob the Jersey
Shore, clutch onto bathing
rings, look like workers
coming up out of manholes.

A friend rides a surfboard
as if on a Chevy's fender,
sharp as a shark's fin, disappears
into the wave's tunnel, mimics

concrete ones that swirl into
New York. The sound of traffic
in the cement circular byways
resonates like inside a conch

I picked up on South Shore
full of the ocean's tremours.
There the tide came in, out.
A glassy toenail painted

over, over in the perfection
of leisure. Here, the Statue of
Liberty rises, a beached mermaid,
the turquoise water has turned

to armour. Unsmiling, defiant,
with the pathos of a Giotto angel
her spiked crown of thorns
bleeds the dark. Choice is sacrificial.

Piggly Wiggly Camera
Fuji Instant Max 8

Like it is a hog for all the views
here on my semitropical isle.

The belly button lens,
everything seen tribal,

connects to the umbilical cord,
squats with the strap curling

like a piglet's tail. I take pictures
through its greedy eye. Think

of the island food store Piggly Wiggly
nourishing Bermudians. Like this Polaroid

feeds me the crumbs of moments.
Piggly Wiggly all the way home.