

Blueberry Mornings

On blueberry mornings we race across the dewy grass
To the waiting car
Shivering in our sleeveless cotton dresses
Mom drives us through the blue-black dawn to the blueberry bog
Where we pile out into the farmyard
With the excitement of school girls going to the county fair
We pass through a shed guarded by the frowning farmer's wife
Who weighs and labels our empty pails
While admonishing us not to pick the red berries
And not to eat the blue ones

Released into the bog, we're pulled between the rows of bushes
By the vanishing fog
We reach eagerly for the blue orbs on the lower branches
While Mom picks the ones higher up,
Like chicks pecking at scattered grain under the protective wings
Of a mother hen

Plink, plink, plink
The sound becomes muffled
As our pails fill and the sky grows brighter
A pink stain spreading across the summer morning
Soon, we're swatting mosquitoes
And squinting into the rising sun,
Resisting the temptation to taste the fruit
Whose fragrance rises with the heat
Our pails grow heavier as we move down the row
Reaching into the abundance of shrub after shrub

By mid-morning, we're back in the shed
Necks and shoulders sunburned, feet covered with black earth
Perspiration trickling between our shoulder blades
Our brimming buckets are weighed, our treasure is paid for, we're ready to return
Cooling ourselves by rolling down the windows
To catch the breeze on the dusty drive home

Soon, we're eating bowls of blueberries with sugar and cream,
Tiny blue islands floating in a white, sweet sea

Gorging ourselves on our accomplishment before scampering off to play
Oblivious to the worries of the adults in our lives

On blueberry mornings, we own all the wealth in the world

© Charlene A. Derby. All rights reserved.