

## Korcula When There Was Still A Yugoslavia

*Judi A. Rypma*

That island--laughing  
on a humped promontory  
    invincible, magic dragon  
breathing fiery fuchsia blossoms  
letting you stroke each rib bone  
tread the legend's arched spine.

That sky--stained  
    fruit bowl colors  
atop a melted opal sea  
    black pines posed like madonnas on shore  
twilight making love  
to a citadel mistress  
her wrinkles etched in honeyed rock.

That year--vowing like Sir Fitzroy Maclean  
to return    assuming  
she would wait  
departing with only notes, a bottle  
of the soil's ruby wine, memories  
    of sweet cherry afternoons

their burgundy glow still untainted  
by the brighter red of blood.