

In the Midst of Water, 1974

By **Mona T. Lydon-Rochelle**

Love is my name.

Thomas Merton

By ripe September beach plums
violet-winged Drurys rest on rugosa rose.
Sultry heat penetrates her second-hand shift
as she walks sandy Wauwinet Road –
skies of scalloped honeysuckle cream
play with the Atlantic sea.

A breeze from the sea
and tastes of tart purple plums
recall a dream.
She is a rose
on heaven's road
in search of love bereft.

Given to thrift,
she forages wild blueberries by the sea,
recalls *Seeds of Contemplation* on the road
to the sea, and becomes
a fragrant wild rose
in a mystic dream.

As if in another dream,
waves crash dunes on the long-shore drift,
spiced bayberries transpose
insanity to poetry
as she plumbs
Merton's ode –

Mona T. Lydon-Rochelle volunteers for Médecins Sans Frontières and was formerly a professor at the University of Washington and University College of Cork, Ireland. She is the author of a poetry chapbook, *Mourning Dove* (Finishing Line Press, 2014). Her poems have appeared in *Floating Bridge Review* and *About Place Journal* and are forthcoming in *Journal of Medical Humanities* and *Sante Fe Literary Journal*. This poem is based on her experience of having read Thomas Merton's *Seeds of Contemplation* (1949), purchased in a thrift store on Nantucket Island.



Mona T. Lydon-Rochelle

Crazy saints walk a road,
sing verse, mind serene –
knowing beyond knowing love comes,
love lifts,
as a flower of light – *fleur-de-lis*,
chanting riptide polyphonic prose.

She laughs with the wild beach rose,
delights as the salt marsh road
ends at Coatue's cobalt sea.
Dreaming daydreams,
shedding her sheer cotton shift,
plunging under a wave, she becomes

a sea rose, surfs the Gulf Stream,
recalls his ode, recalls her gift,
poetess kissed by September's sun.