

Grènn èk bourjon

Ékri par Nathan Wendte

Ça komensé, konm tou bon zafær, avèk Lamour:

Sô popa té travayé en Laflòrid,
Li vini zami,
Li vini nèg,
É sô fiy té èlvé ap kouté bèl langaj mistè-çala.

Li t'olé kouri, é mo té p'olé kité,
Répons-yé mo té gin vo pa kèstyon-yé mo mandé.
Pou nouzòt, ennaryær lê montañ, yé té gin la fosé,
Mé langaj-la rèsté, kolé, mélé èk fransé Lafrans mo té konné parlé.

Alon vansé--trò zan apré:

Mo vini Lavil avan dékouvær,
Mô paren-yé rivé mèm plas
Yær?
Avan yær?
Avan plizyè yær.

Yé monté, yé vwayajé,
Pi lá yé planté té lwin.
Mo té né avèk lalanng mérikín,
Pærsonn pa pòrté dœy,
Pou langaj-yé famiy-la té bliyé.

Mo pa françé konm vou, vou yê,
Mo parl, mo shant, mo priy ça, wé,
Kanmèm yé na pa asé pou
Frenchman-çila kapab pasé.

Non, mo krò pa mo té né “kréyòl,”
Moman çé *hiraeth*,
Popa çé *Wanderlust*,
É mô kœr ap kouri-vini toupertou.

Seeds and buds

Written and translated by Nathan Wendte

It began, like all good things, with Love:

Her dad had worked in Florida,
He became a friend,
He became a “nèg,”
And his daughter was raised listening to that beautiful mystery language.

She wanted to go, and I didn’t want to leave,
The answers that I had aren’t worth the questions that I asked.
For us, behind the mountains lay the pit,
But the language stayed, stuck, mixed with the French from France I used to speak.

Let’s fast forward--three years later:

I came to New Orleans before discovering,
My relatives arrived in the same place
Yesterday?
The day before yesterday?
Many days before yesterday.

They ascended, they travelled,
And the place where they planted was far away.
I was born with the English language,
No one grieved,
For the languages the family had forgotten.

I’m not French like you, you are,
I speak, I sing, I pray it, yeah,
But even so there isn’t enough
to let this Frenchman pass.

No, I don’t believe I was born “Creole,”
My mother is hiraeth,
My father is Wanderlust,
And my heart is everywhere going and coming.

Learn more

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