Piazza San Marco

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Recommended Citation
Available at: http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/amaranthus/vol1997/iss1/27

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Kerri Meyer  

One Fast Trip

Nothing like diesel fumes
spewed from an autobus
for taking me back
to High Coombe Road
along the green Thames,
or the wild scent of thyme
to bring me right to the shady edge
of the Place de L'Hotel de Ville
where the brown old man sells
his herbed olives at twenty-five francs
for the oily paper bagful,
and in less than a moment
a saccharin sip of anise tea
whisks me back to the warm
library high in the Cevennes
where the oil lamps burn late
into the November evenings.

Kerri Meyer  
Piazza San Marco

In some crazy way I'm not afraid to see the green sea
lapping up over the paving stones of the square.
It must be the way the crisp, white gondolier
steps so casually from the middle of the water into
his long dark boat, how he flicks the
ashes of his cigarette into the greenish blue.
He kisses the dark-haired woman sideways on her cheek.
Maybe it's that she's standing on the sea as well,
skirt brushing the waves, the tarnished sun
washing her dress in watery orange.
Now the black boat turns its curved bowsprit
out towards Murano and I'm startled
by the belching of an outboard engine.
The icy wake rinses over my sandals
and I stagger back onto the square,
driving the pigeons up into the sky
in a great raucous cloud of blue and grey.