

# Love is a delicate chain of moments

—for Justin in France

*Marilyn Bushman-Carlton*

Here, the heavy brown ones from your father's coat,  
there the ladybugs from Jari's first grade dress,  
and from your birthday shirt, five urgent reds.  
You, sorting the buttons while I sewed.

On a black magnetic board,  
I move words into fragments, little poems:  
*travel the diamond road*  
*recall together lusciously*  
*incubate that vision*  
*chocolate moon*  
*worship delirious color*

If I study words, rearrange, and link them,  
they become personal,  
as weirdly accurate  
as a horoscope or class prediction,  
mythical as kept buttons,  
true as portions of scrambled dreams.

Last night you were not in France,  
but in Brazil. The dream started with a sambaó  
a stream of green and yellow, orange.  
Your father and I were there  
to bring you home.

*Here it rains like a bird*  
*Shadows crackle under light*  
*Magic has smeared a thousand pictures*

Three of us were driving a high road.  
The moon was brown as a Hershey's Special Dark.  
Not one white star.  
We were holding to the rod of slick road,  
and though the clouds were shooting rain,  
your father, wearing that brown coat,  
kept the headlights off, the wipers, too.  
True to form, I was fevered by the height;  
my brake foot clawed the floor.

Though you are twenty-one,  
last night you were small in the bucket of my lap,  
and accurate—  
down to the heaped black hair  
and the red buttons closing your shirt.