

## Treetops in Kenya

for Barbara

In your picture, floating high  
over river, mountain, golden valley,  
queen of a continent  
with fierce, playful eyes.

You spoke to me, but words drifted  
away on a morphine tide.

We still laughed at new meaning,  
old jokes, the well-worn shuffle  
of visitors behind a faded curtain.

Just another long campaign  
to fight. You loved being  
in the spotlight; seer, touchstone  
of justice, honesty, joker  
in red beret, mini skirt, lipstick.

I should have joined you  
on that trip, holding back  
against the colossal sky,  
pile of postcards in a drawer.

You waited for the crematorium  
to pull your trick, forcing grey suits  
into a Monty Python sketch,  
skipping them out to Bring Me Sunshine.

Yes, calm warrior, you wrote that scene  
in early evening, before pain and fear

began their shift, before friends and family  
scuttled back to your side,  
before Kenyan treetops lost their light.

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