

GEORGE ELLIOTT CLARKE

## Sestina: April

After gods, we surrender to lovers,  
 Seeking beauty that always satisfies,  
 To revel in sunlit obscenities,  
 Every gay April, in the spring tumult,  
 To engage in creamy crimes—  
 An ivory music, as indestructible as sunlight.

Something there is about April that satisfies—  
 Even if one suffer physical obscenities  
 Like those that drive priests to tumult  
 And exultation in the filthiest crimes,  
 Those conducted far from sunlight  
 In those murky lairs reserved for lovers.

But holy are the bedtime obscenities  
 Where lover pitches lover to a tumult,  
 Spicing bland sins with sugary crimes,  
 In moonlight, dawn, and even April sunlight.  
 Thus, lovers actually behave like lovers,  
 Having each other until the other satisfies.

Nature, in April, floods in tumult:  
 Its white churn washes away crimes;  
 Its clarity is like water and sunlight,  
 The ideal assemblage for real lovers,  
 Who only turn away once love satisfies,  
 Once they have tasted joyous obscenities.

In April, the young commit no crimes,  
But are as clean and honest as sunlight,  
And love each other as blamelessly as lovers,  
Discovering, like saints, the ways sin satisfies,  
Excusing each other of any obscenities,  
While each one milks a tidal tumult.

April is the month of love and sunlight:  
Tell all those who claim to be lovers!  
For thirty refreshing days, it satisfies,  
All those poets of obscenities,  
Who find passion a physical tumult,  
And conceive kisses as delicious crimes.

Tell all the lovers that April satisfies,  
That its obscenities are a glorious tumult,  
And that all its crimes dissolve to sunlight.