

a swimming pool." Imagine the trainer's surprise when he found his seal, clothed in a full-length polar bear coat and adorned with a diamond necklace, performing unnatural acts with a stranger.

-- Greg Boyd

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PLUMS

Suddenly, toward the end of summer, they are everywhere, huge black love-bites on Sunday morning skin. Bulging with the sun's heat and puce colored, like fleas black with borrowed juice, they are piled in mounds, a giant's caviar.

So rich their blush is a paling: blue.

One doesn't eat them. Break the skin and suck. They go down in a slurp: black oysters; a liquid titivation of the tongue; a perfumed embalming, stiffening the spine with pleasure; Cleopatra's dying kiss, asp stung.

Mind the stone.

CHERRIES

One of the pretty discoveries of Marcel Proust, chimérique de son thé.

Polished inside the tree as they course upwards through the limbs to their spring réclame, they are the color of drops scattered by wounded curassiers in gaudy uniforms on rolling green 18th century battlefields.

One thinks of ancient lacquer, of the snub noses of Chinese schoolgirls in February snow, of Amazonian nipples mother-of-pearl lustered by War's wet mouth.

Bloodknots holding the huge whiteness of Manet's Christ.