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The Thing About Buffalo Berries

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The Thing About Buffalo Berries

Quantity.
On the whole property, hundreds of bushes: leaves like green-black commas, Hide-and-seek berries, which, if they weren’t so red, would defy all detection (Seed-pearl buttons late of Victorian wedding dresses, blinding seamstresses) Fiddly from which to harvest without water-bled, weak-ochre-hued finger ink

OR INSTEAD
Quality.
Within each fruit miniscule, myriad sensations: sting upon muncher’s tongue Something nearly sweet, followed by bitter waves of taste that conjure poison (Suspicion that biographers will hereafter advise, “The subject died writhing”) This from a single dot of a buffalo berry—imagine consuming a huge handful

BUT WHAT OF
Quarantine-Fare Fitness?
Under headings of “survival foods,” these berries sit: reward to wild gatherers Chock-full of vitamins, infinite in variety of use, healthy as almost none else (Fruit of serene pickers, alert to thin-sprig laden branches in long-hour labour) Once dried, convertible from shrivelled to edible by each off-grid connoisseur

OR EVEN
Quarrel-Silencing?
Over other berry dishes, Indigenous ingenuity raises buffalo-berry ice cream To a height few might imagine, given the single-berry taste described above (Sugar a requirement, but worth introduction: wholy, happily transformative) Whip to foamy thickness, freeze, enjoy: who says “natural” means punitive?
CAROLYN CREED, a PhD. in English (UM, 1998), has taught university English since 1978. She teaches all over Manitoba, Canada, with University College of the North. Her poems appear in subTerrain, the Global Poetry Anthology, and Poet to Poet; her review of Rachel Rose’s Marry & Burn may be downloaded from the Fall 2016 (vol. 15, no. 1) issue of The Goose, and her essay “The North as Muse” is featured in the latest issue of Classmate. Her poetry displays her sense of urgency over the human need to interact kinetically with the natural world.