

Key West Candles

Live here in Key West
and soon, passion begins,
a candle in a windless jungle,
bodies of one song,
melody of palm trees
and turquoise water
and a heart that never shrinks.

You can drive down
to the beach,
the most southern point
of the United States,
turn the radio
to a Cuban station,
buy a conch shell,
hear the music
of the spheres:
a hot love song
beating in the heart
like ocean taking sand,
another candle,
a wick of veins,
passion made of wax,
as soft as skin,
as sticky as the blood
that's almost boiling.

Dream in Key West
and soon, coral angels
fill the bed,
a train of chariots
creeps round the room,
kittens from Hemingway House
curl about your thighs.
And still, a candle,
masquerading moon
of salt and heat,
a passion that never leaves you.

Live here to the fullest,
tanned heart,
human flame so blue
the sky feels worthless,
candles soaring to
the size of a man.

—Barry Dempster