

Good Fortune by Alicia Hoffman

An Ink Publications Broadside

In Workshops

Katherine speaks of her boyfriend's guitar,
the way the chords of his ribs become
the dissonance between the riffs.
At one point, the instrument hangs
like a cherry blossom between their absence
before it sheds. Caroline is obsessed
with Virginia Woolf. The way her sweaters
button perfect to the cleft of her peach
colored neck is just annoying. Once,
someone wrote the strokes of lightning
took the power out. Within the darkness
of a Chinese Restaurant someone split
a good fortune, lifted their chop-stick
and laughed. Red lipstick. White Teeth.
This is what lingers in the after-flash.
The dilution of color, the fade before
the clear. It is as if I was never there,
which is true, even after the revision
of names and the buffet began to offer
a more diversified selection, though
this is what I would like – to remember
what is never written in stone – the clink
of the glasses unexpected and clamoring
in the dark, the waiters sensed only
by the shush-shush of their starched slacks
rushing by in blackness, the Moo Shoo and
the Kung Pao overwhelming
the voices of strangers rising like steam
from metallic platters, unavoidably
closer now than they ever were before.

Good Fortune

You will come
to know
the language
of stone.
The moon
will cast
its net,
the fishermen
will have
a lucky night
on the sea. The sea
birds will take you
somewhere
near Tian Hou
a silverfish
will reflect
the light from a star,
and like a mirror
you will belly up
with a mouthful
of gray, a smooth
and solid reflection.

Patterns

There are patterns here.
Here, there are even
quirks in disappearing.
Once, to get away,
six months into the stay
I met a man who has seen me.
This is some fortune, these verbs
linking what we try to unchain.
This is not meant to be
a confession. Here, there
is no booth. Listen. Here
there is the rustling of
the pages of the notes,
the tempo of the waves
the seabirds carry with them
in their exotic names,
the albatross and petrel,
the ordinary gull,
not to mention the plovers
of New Jersey sticking
their pine-needle beaks
like siphons into east-coast sand.
This has nothing to do with
them. This has nothing to do
with anything at all. This just is
an attempt to understand
what appears random is not
as random as it tends to appear.

Author Bio

Alicia Hoffman currently
resides in Rochester, NY where
she teaches English at Bishop
Kearney High School. After
receiving her MA in Poetry
from SUNY Brockport, her
poems have been published in
Redactions: Poetry and Poetics,
Red Wheelbarrow, *Remark*, *Poetry*
MidWest, *Flutter*, *The Centrifugal*
Eye, *Octaves*, *Poets Against*
the War, and *elimae*. She has
recently been nominated for
a Pushcart Prize and is psyched
to publish a broadside with
Ink Publications.

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