4-13-2015

A Meal for the Man on the Redline

Stephen Lin
Gettysburg College

Follow this and additional works at: http://cupola.gettysburg.edu/surge

Part of the Asian American Studies Commons, Other Languages, Societies, and Cultures Commons, Race and Ethnicity Commons, and the Sociology of Culture Commons

Share feedback about the accessibility of this item.

http://cupola.gettysburg.edu/surge/224

This is the author's version of the work. This publication appears in Gettysburg College's institutional repository by permission of the copyright owner for personal use, not for redistribution. Cupola permanent link: http://cupola.gettysburg.edu/surge/224

This open access blog post is brought to you by The Cupola: Scholarship at Gettysburg College. It has been accepted for inclusion by an authorized administrator of The Cupola. For more information, please contact cupola@gettysburg.edu.
A Meal for the Man on the Redline

Abstract
These words will bite,

Acid bubbling
At the pit of your bowels

Vowels volatile won’t

Be easy to swallow. [excerpt]

Keywords
Surge, Surge Gettysburg, Gettysburg College, Center for Public Service, race, racism, stereotyping, bullying, Asian culture

Disciplines
Asian American Studies | Other Languages, Societies, and Cultures | Race and Ethnicity | Race, Ethnicity and Post-Colonial Studies | Sociology of Culture

Comments
Surge is a student blog at Gettysburg College where systemic issues of justice matter. Posts are originally published at surge.gettysburg.wordpress.com Through stories and reflection, these blog entries relate personal experiences to larger issues of equity, demonstrating that –isms are structural problems, not actions defined by individual prejudice. We intend to popularize justice, helping each other to recognize our biases and unlearn the untruths.

This blog post is available at The Cupola: Scholarship at Gettysburg College: http://cupola.gettysburg.edu/surge/224
These words will bite,
Acid bubbling
At the pit of your bowels
Vowels volatile won’t
Be easy to swallow.
Bring your heirloom silverware.
Cut at the crux
Of your tangled roots and
How about some dumplings
To start and maybe an order
Of fried rice
Hibachi-style.
Is this not
What you came for?
Looking for fortunes
In a cookie?
Maybe
We can fix it all.
Our petty vile history.
You said,
“Tuck in your shirt. Show Some respect, young man.”
So I’ll straighten my leash
And be your waiter. Waiting
For your petals to open,
Let you drink my tears.
To quench your thirst
To cleanse your pallet.
Try a piece of my fiber
An appetizing teaser.
May my rhythms
Fill your growling belly
Growing with contempt
Empty. Contemplate
This feast, plates piled
Plenty to subsist

Bad news,
Bear it.
I am not
Your China Town.
Stop trying
To compart-
Mentalize me.
I do not speak for Asia.
It’s kind of a continent.
I don’t Jeet Kune Do
Like Bruce Lee
Or Wing Chun
Like Ip Man.
I won’t dance for you.
I won’t twist my legs
Behind my head for
Cheap thrills.
I’m a cut throat-
Lover. Not a fighter
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Line</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our perpetual communion</td>
<td>And my words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May this hunger never end.</td>
<td>Will leave you speechless.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growl on as I was</td>
<td>I will outlive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minding my own. Ear buds</td>
<td>Just as I outlived</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plugged in. Your foot</td>
<td>My middle school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Propped out.</td>
<td>Tormentors and their minions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It wasn’t the taste</td>
<td>Their “ching-chongs”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of downtrodden dumps</td>
<td>Left scars that they dared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you smeared across my Face. These words:</td>
<td>To call calligraphy—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Can you even see Anything</td>
<td>I outgrew that portrait.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of those Squinty eyes?”</td>
<td>Climbed out of Windowless opium dens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More like,</td>
<td>And now I see right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Go back to China, You chink.”</td>
<td>Through your monuments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What keeps me awake is that</td>
<td>And my Great Wall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awake is that I</td>
<td>Was built on the backs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Did not.
Could not
My skin still crawling
On that shit-
Stained train.
My tongue bleeds
I bit down. Hard.
Not from when my chin
Met the ground.
It’s simply not polite
To yell at your elders
Said some buddha with a beard
Confucius, no?
A simple “Fuck you, too”
Would have sufficed,
But here I am. My smiles
Serving your tall tables.
How can I
Help you?

Of my people—
No trespassing.
So liken me
To that buck-
Toothy
Grinning gremlin
That you call
China-man.
Riddle with my anatomy
Belittle centuries
Of sacred tradition. Go ahead.
Eat till you’re content.
But if you have come
To try my takeout
Message, I will not
Sugarcoat it.
I am more
Raw than any
Sashimi you’ve ever sampled.
And if you have come to vulture
Without spoon—

Feeding you the answers.

No.

I refuse to send my
Loco-Motives
Down your shadowy tunnels.

Forget your choo-choo

Choices. They’re

Not on the menu today.

This is homemade. Be careful.

It’s hot.

At some Red Dragon Buffet,

Hungry for dim sum

And then some,

Then you missed your stop, sir.

Go get your own damn food.

Stephen Lin ’16
Contributing Writer