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 surgegettysburg.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
A MEAL FOR THE MAN ON THE REDLINE

April 13, 2015

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
Our perpetual communion                  And my words
May this hunger never end.            Will leave you speechless.
Growl on as I was                     I will outlive.
Minding my own. Ear buds              Just as I outlived
Plugged in. Your foot                 My middle school
Propped out.                          Tormentors and their minions.
It wasn't the taste                   Their “ching-chongs”
Of downtrodden dumps                  Left scars that they dared
That you smeared across my            To call calligraphy—
Face. These words:                    I outgrew that portrait.
“Can you even see
Anything
Out of those
Squinty eyes?”
“Go back to China,
You chink.”
More like,
My eyes are not closed.
Your towers are merely
Made of glass
Not ivory.

What keeps me                          And my Great Wall
Awake is that I                        Was built on the backs
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did not.</th>
<th>Of my people—</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Could not</td>
<td>No trespassing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My skin still crawling</td>
<td>To that buck-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On that shit-</td>
<td>Toothy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stained train.</td>
<td>Grinning gremlin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My tongue bleeds</td>
<td>That you call</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not from when my chin</td>
<td>Riddle with my anatomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Met the ground.</td>
<td>Belittle centuries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s simply not polite</td>
<td>Of sacred tradition. Go ahead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To yell at your elders</td>
<td>Eat till you’re content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Said some buddha with a beard</td>
<td>But if you have come</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confucius, no?</td>
<td>To try my takeout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A simple “Fuck you, too”</td>
<td>Message, I will not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would have sufficed,</td>
<td>Sugarcoat it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>But here I am. My smiles</td>
<td>I am more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serving your tall tables.</td>
<td>Raw than any</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How can I</td>
<td>Sashimi you’ve ever sampled.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help you?</td>
<td>And if you have come to vulture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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