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A Meal for the Man on the Redline

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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.

SURGE

[VERB] : to move suddenly or powerfully forward or upward

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
May this hunger never end.

Growl on as I was
Minding my own. Ear buds
Plugged in. Your foot
Propped out.

It wasn't the taste
Of downtrodden dumps
That you smeared across my
Face. These words:

"Can you even see
Anything
Out of those
Squinty eyes?"

More like,
"Go back to China,
You chink."

What keeps me
Awake is that I

And my words
Will leave you speechless.

I will outlive.
Just as I outlived
My middle school
Tormentors and their minions.

Their "ching-chongs"
Left scars that they dared
To call calligraphy—
I outgrew that portrait.

Climbed out of
Windowless opium dens
And now I see right
Through your monuments.

My eyes are not closed.
Your towers are merely
Made of glass
Not ivory.

And my Great Wall
Was built on the backs

Did not.

Could not

Speak. Up. Get. Up.

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.

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