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.
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 compartmentalize 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  
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.

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