Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Jamie Asaye FitzGerald: Words for an Embroidered Bird

Jamie Asaye FitzGerald · Tuesday, October 22nd, 2013

Jamie Asaye FitzGerald has poems forthcoming in *Works & Days* and has appeared in other journals including Literary Mama, Media Cake, the anthologies *Hunger and Thirst* and *Ariel XXII*, as well as on Seattle public buses. Her essay, "Loose Sushi," was recently published by *Discover Nikkei*, as part of its Itadakimasu! project. She currently works for *Poets & Writers*.
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How It Might Have Happened

for Mémé
I want to live,
she said before she died—
the tumors grown quick
as mushrooms after rain.
It wasn't what he'd expected.
In his scheme, he died first—
falling from a ladder
while painting the window trim grey.
At his services, the relatives said:
He could have lived to 100!
His picture stood near his parents'
on the family shrine,
where his only son, the eldest child,
placed fresh rice and lit incense.
She left crocheted doilies,
gold jewelry between pillowcases,
money in the rice,
the memory of food.
He sat in the outrigger,
her ashes in his lap,
as the paddlers took him out
to sea.
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Feels Like Freckles

I wish there were words
for an embroidered bird
or for the eyelids
of Chinese parade dragons
other than these words.
Perhaps the words needed
are not for these items
but for the feelings
they represent.
Does an embroidered bird
feel happy or sad?
Do the eyelids of Chinese
parade dragons feel
like pleasure or fear?
Maybe the feeling is another
item entirely. Maybe the eyelids
of Chinese parade dragons
feel like butterflies in the belly
or like falling in a dream.
Maybe an embroidered bird
feels like a rain drizzle
on flushed cheeks. Maybe
it feels like freckles.

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