

## The Race

Those mornings when  
the lone, glowing moon sits  
blushing, swathed in smoky blur.  
A crispy leaf carried by a restful  
breeze unbothered by hushed lull  
politely interrupted by squeaks  
of one sparrow and chirps of another.

Your alarm clock blares awake at five thirty,  
The roaring bellows of its trumpets, shaking  
You, thundering down on you and  
You know you have to catch the six o'clock bus  
But you,  
out of annoyance  
at this alarm that you,  
yourself, set last night,  
turn it off and  
snooze, and  
snooze, and  
snooze  
And think to yourself if  
you can afford to be late today, if  
you can just take a break and  
let time wait for you, but time  
does not wait, in fact it does not care  
Whether you're exhausted because  
you worked past midnight last night,  
It does not care that you have to  
Travel two hours to get an education,  
It does not care that you have to  
Catch the six o'clock bus.

So, at five fifty, you turn on the blinding,  
Yellow light piercing through your eyelids,  
Stretching your arms out in a V  
To the point you hear them crack.

And in the brisk darkness of dawn,  
You catch the six twenty bus,  
Knowing two hours in advance,  
That you will be late to first period.

### **A Letter to My Brother**

As a chubby little eight-year-old, you  
Often pulled on your newborn brother's toes,  
Making him laugh until he cried, he knew  
He'd never forget the love that you showed.

Seven years later, you walked him to school,  
But every morning he arrived late since  
You always had to poop at eight, but he knew  
You never missed a day, never a chagrin.

Now, you're twenty-five, and found your soul-mate,  
You'll have a second family, a new chapter in life,  
Today's the big day to celebrate and commemorate,  
After you both say "yes", you may kiss the bride.

Have an amazing life, soon-to-be father,  
And a great marriage- From your little brother.

### **The Bicycle**

In a gray village far from home, I found on its side,  
reflected by the full moon, an orange  
bicycle seen by many but made uniform like  
a clone of its kin, all like interchangeable metal.  
Its spokes clenched by a silver bar, locked in place,  
only freed when wanted, as much as is paid.

Its past journeys unheard of, maybe it had been  
swishing through blades of green grass and horsetail,  
catching up to the blocking street cars that turn right,  
slowly bumping its front wheel against a wall of a market,  
taken by and seized from the profiteer, locked and  
left fallen on its side.

The wheels turn, released from those indefinite clutches.  
Pedaling home in a village under the moon on this unlocked  
orange bicycle, the firm rubber wheels cruising over  
tiny sediments previously crushed by soles  
of those who bear the dry laboring palms.  
Masses of cement from one - story houses, decades  
old in disrepair, force me to avoid them or be  
guided between irregular oscillations into  
the crumbling asphalt cracks in the road, bumping.

Across a river, next to twenty-story  
apartment buildings, besides a light  
blue radiating convenience store,  
I slow down and stop pedaling. I lock  
the bicycle upright, it awaits a new person,  
a new day where it will sail  
and be locked  
somewhere else.

## Reunion

Cast down the redgold poems of fortune  
On both sides of the front door,  
Tie the tops of red pumpkin paper lanterns  
Brimming with chrome yellow light trapped and  
Glowing through the nights of the Greater Cold  
And through the beginning of Spring.

Clean the edges and corners of the house,  
Leaving no trace of dirt from this year.  
In the north, fill dumplings to their brim,  
As much as their thin white ridges can hold,  
So that they appear to be gold nuggets  
Coveted now and during dynasties long ago.

Paste red cutouts of prosperity, fortune, and luck,  
Displaying them proudly on the windows.  
In the south, prepare a basin of white rice cakes,  
Adding chrysanthemum petals to release  
The aroma of a sprouting flower garden

On a warm spring day.  
On the eve of Spring,  
Storefronts close,  
Airports, train stations, and highways fill  
With hundreds of millions of  
Farmers, doctors, engineers, teachers, people.  
Their first journey home.

The next morning the crackle of red firecrackers  
Fill the streets. Redgold lanterns  
Line the sidewalks. Adorned in fresh red silks,  
Children bow in respect to the elderly  
Two generations above. Red envelopes  
Filled with the fortune of last year to bring  
Prosperity this year. A parade of mythical lions  
Supported by eight legs are followed close by  
The beating of drums and  
The clashing of gongs.  
Spring Festival has begun.

**Over a river**

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