

THE SPOON RIVER Poetry Review

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Birth, Death, and In Between, Guava Juice

Praise limes

Praise blanched almonds, the willing
flesh of salmon, satin beds of risotto
smoky with portabello

What is red without strawberries,
without the crisp Grecian torsos
of peppers?

Where is mystery but in the purple catacombs
of cabbage, the jazz rhythms of honeycomb?

O, gorgeous symmetry

mandarin oranges under an avocado moon

Love smooth as crème brûlée,

love rising from jasmine tea,

love pressing nasturtium petals to our cheeks

Blessed are the countries

of our tongues that translate chile

and cherry-lavender relish, the anise of ancestors

Like them, we shall not eat eagle,

we shall not eat eel

Thank you for the candor of apples, the genius
of kiwi, split open tartly, geode-like

The cruel cusp of salt succored by
chocolate, sweet and sour allegories

Thank you for bread's warm body

like perfumed arms around us in the dark

For French-cut string beans

thrilled as flag poles

waiting for the humid caresses of a human mouth,
waiting to join flesh, to be allocated to bones

Marinate our hopes
and let forgiveness cling to our teeth al dente
Let us taste the steam of longing when we bite into pot stickers
Make us from dim sum, from moss and root
Make us from the universe,
annealed by fire, by bile and spasm,
stars in our bellies, ash and snow,
wheat and weeds into clay
Fatten us with memory and peaches
Ripen love on our bodies
At last, in the sun-seasoned earth, feed us,
our spirits' aperture,
feed our insatiable hunger to be consumed