

Aleah Sato

Retirement Party

She has many girls.
Count them :
one full of gravy;
one with four eyelids;
another licks its lips as autism
tries to speak.
Here she calls upon
the beak-bearer.
This one can sing.
The rest are all ordinary.
She told me she wanted
to be placed in a story
about Versailles.
She spoke
to me in French and
when her French disappeared,
another woman
took notes. She was the oldest
employee in our office – even
the boss wasn't sure
when she started or how
she came to imagine us,
cluttered around her
like so much inertia.

Palm Sunday

the zipper has plans.
to undo what has begun
takes a careful seamstress,
a weaver of stars,
a diorama.
tonight the ties talk,
exchange numbers.
the stockings inch close -
caress the whalebone stitch.
the breasts, hidden
under palms,
long for diamonds.
legs part posies,
slick skinned
weasels under wire.
the mouth
forms an "o" -
escape for
feathered prey
like mistake or
"we should not."
the cuff links
stay forgotten
beside the bed.
the sofa, a gilded swan,
glides with us,
posed as we are,
like mannequins
of so many beautiful things.

7 days spent dreaming

"If a little dreaming is dangerous..."

-- Marcel Proust

day 1

you appear in the sugar bowl
you extend a feather
that is the terrible veil
of snow
it consumes us

day 2

my eyes stay glued
on the ceiling
something is crawling
over the floorboards
imagined vampires

day 3

the world
is a rolling ball
of string
and me
black cat messing about

day 4

the sky opened up
when she struck the man
his flushed jaw started a fire
and in the fire
the uncontrolled darkness
also opened

day 5

a knife
flashing in the sun
feels like the moon
on an August evening
going in

day 6
I'm on a train
I'm forgetting the skin
I wore before leaving

day 7
I imagine your arms
like rock pigeons
extending over Berlin
while I stay dreaming
of the phoenix

Companion

You would not recognize me
possessed by half-formed images.
These mysteries you know
but will not gaze upon.
So we put them between
us like rivers, draw in
our eyes – look upward
to heaven, as if either of us
could believe in heaven.
When the blind enter the kingdom,
when the camel walks
like thread through the eye,
our story will be written.
You would color the gardens
with the opaque hues
of the dead. Even your skin,
stretched as canvas
across that melody,
cannot undo the history
of what is to come.
Look closely, you,
who could be the
only one to know me
as I deserve to be known.

*Aleah Sato is a marketing manager and co-owner of Ricksticks Inc, a visual communications firm in Toronto. She is the author of the recently released book *Badlands* and the forthcoming *Stillborn Wilderness* (Pooka Press 2007). Her work has appeared in *Nthposition*, *Adirondack Review*, *juked*, *Just West of Athens*, *Blue Fifth Review*, and *Eclectica*. She can be reached at www.aleahsato.com <<http://www.aleahsato.com>> .*