

TWO POEMS

Vyxz Vasquez

SUNSHINE

Little feet dancing
a shuffle across glass floor,
a young chick paces
its casket-stage. Behind
it, a few photos
highlighting the final act.
Above, ribbons with names unfurled.
Underneath, the conductor
folds his arms; no furious
gestures tonight. For once,
the orchestra does well:
relatives jump and wail,
their monotone voices blend
between silences. Without direction,
the mourners play
for the grand parade, whether it happens.
Even the majorette has left.
For now, a small bird
wanders aimlessly and unlucky
to be picked for such sport,
refuses to peck.

USE FOR COMMERCIAL

That McDonalds', the one around since elementary,
way before we met, became our meeting place.
Once, I waited for three hours, not knowing whether you
were coming, so I ordered a meal, let's say a Big Mac
meal, and checked my beeper every fifteen minutes.
Looked at the date and it was correct, so I called your house,
but nobody answered, not even your mother.
An hour passed and I couldn't tell
if you were getting my messages, like that time we were
on the phone for nine hours and I wasn't sure if you
fell asleep because I couldn't hear you breathing
or when we broke up and threw away the promise ring
and I sat there at the waiting shed crying, or when we
weren't together yet, and I would stand looking outside a classroom
window, see if you've crossed the street safely

yet in the next hour, I only have my French fries and I start thinking
about our plans, how we were always mapping out our lives:
after college, get married; have careers; travel; kids after
five years—maybe one or two—grow old and die happy
but the house music interrupts with *Time*.
I've been passing time watching trains go by all of my life
and it kinda sucks that that detail stays, but it's been two hours
and I can't wait to tell you that today, they discovered seven planets
like Earth from 49 light years away, and that I Googled light years
and it says it's the same as Earth years, only one has to travel the speed
of light, and that when my aunt died of breast cancer at 64, my uncle
couldn't find a place for his excess love and grief, even as he was
the one who didn't want to give her oxygen, and that I lost a poem

I read a while ago, one that moved me so much but now is gone and I am writing to find that poem. Today, my toddler son plays with a screwdriver and pretends to tighten something on my head and if you were around, you'd tell me, that's the poem. I think about telling you how we've come full circle to art being salvation being a lie being treason being the only space free, but I will share instead what I read on Quora: *There is no word for a parent who loses his child.* Also: *We can hear the sound of a plane before it reaches us.*

On the third hour, I'll call your house.
Still no answer. I'll make up
a meet cute instead: you'll carry a tray
of burger and spaghetti as a surprise,
I'll be looking at the door and not
see you; we'll hit each other
at a corner where there's a blind spot.
My shirt red with meat sauce! You'll say sorry
and make up for lost time. But here I am
where an old man sings in our cliché,
which at 3:59 pm, September 24, 1998, McDonalds'
Eversounded bright and new.