

NOTES FROM THE OTHER TABLE

Rin Yang

to be loved was always a form of violation, violence, but he's got his hands curled up into fists looking for a wall to punch out instead of inwards. and i want to say— tell me how to be free. tell me how to be something other, inside this body /

pulled his chest open and bit at the muscle of his shoulder so he could unravel the way i did admired a shape that would always fit him better than my own / & he did, julienne curls and green scraps of zucchini for the compost

i've had pasta better than men i've known, i ate and was nourished
i was hungry for so long, crawling down the bedroom floor/
/pick-axing away at dirty hills just for a packaged snack.
something that fell down behind the boudoir and was forgotten, another missing lover

eat and be made. i was hungry & he fed me—
stood behind him while he cooked, put my arms around him
& made my hands meet again in the pocket of his apron /
warm like the house he inhabited

all these things that can be bought and worn— the clip on earrings i wear because i'm too scared to get them pierced, the ballet flats a gift from a friend and a wardrobe full of pretty thrifted things, i collected the material and built my nest

—& all the things that can't be / notes from the other table;



we've exhausted all the shopping lists,
painted our rooms bright colors that matched our nails,
dabbed our eyes with receipts from dangerfield, so overpriced and yet we
can't resist/

but all this consumer concentration has me feeling hollow in the stomach all
the glitter coming off in the sheets when you can't wash it out in the shower

wanted to be nourished, wanted to be filled
wanted to eat and become
but you can't chow down on a pair of star print jeans
or teeth your way into adulthood clamped down on a hot pink choker

what i needed was a seat at the table, what i needed was my own name and
id

so he took me to the combination kitchen dining area, apologies for the mess
— blame the roommates not me / set a place for me at the counter as i
pretended to work equations, french verbs for a general course, planned
holidays in my head

nothing mathematical about the way you cook, finger dips to check water
lines and an eyeball for the measurements, it comes from the heart not the
mind

was always a hungry child, ashamed of what couldn't be shed or loss.

all those years counting the wrong numbers— calculated track limits when i
could've sprinted off course & been happy instead / was lonely and ate away
at myself because i thought my name could be control— didn't become my
own dish until i knew the sound of every wrong one

