

### 13 Portraits in a Small Room

all worlds were, and are, recognizable. the man at the front corner table, talking for show into his airman's headset, unplugs to investigate the tall woman with red braids to his left. she taps her keyboard, shifting cursor and eyes, and he engages while her tattooed friend clears the table in gray sweatpants & a turtleneck. the trio closest to the counter hugs and talks in and out of time, with distraction but the loveliest, most joyful distraction. lattes pass hand to hand like their own economy. an old man in fatigues at the window bar pushes the door closed and the icy chill out only to pull it open for an old friend's arrival by bike. a couple in near-matching outfits claim a seat near the door that will soon after be reclaimed by a man in a red knit hat who prefers the distant company of the baristas, who look exactly alike, a duo all masks and chapped hands & spilled milk.

child –

conduct your ceremonies of leaves and twigs.

lead like the wolf,

chin to the warm sun.

spread your body across cool grass

and let the ants amuck.

listen to the waves sing your song.

let lollies stick to your fingers,

let chocolate stain your shorts.

one day,

the grass will only be green,

the sea will only be wet.

liquid flowers

sweetness

does pour onto my tongue

instead of from it;

let the world

stay,

a glassy promise of tomorrow;

let tonight

Taste of petals.

there was an evening in an old hotel,  
back when that was still the way things were.

gatherings,

gathering things in waste baskets

filled with words

to overflow a mind.

there was dinner in an old hotel

filled with plasma drinks and identifications.

a gathering to listen,

not to look,

to listen and feel:

the skin prickle,

the movements rush,

cold metal chairs and cold winter rain.

i tapped poems on a metal chair

i traded paper for the pleasure of holding ink and cellulose tissues.

crystal-blue screens are not the same:

but nothing ever is.

## Arachne

I've been told I get too involved; and not involved enough. I take the comments either way and I say to them,

“I'm involved as little or as much as you'd like.”

My shop is down the eastern end of 28; you can find me there just about 24/7, which is likely how I end up with complaints of over-involvement. But, of course, a seamstress is only as good as her most shoddy work. And so I work hard when I am wanted to weave and sew. Of course, too, I can only work with what I've got; capes and jeans tattered from inappropriate wear and tear will take patience, from both myself and their owner. Funniest to me are the times a customer comes in and asks for a quick patch, then returns in a week with the same hole and complains. I am not a miracle worker; I only weave string.