

Bridget-Rose Lee

the last bus

(for K)

in the event you must die
in a crash I want me
there, best if you want
me too. in the event
you prefer another
I have been living with
this. you'd rather
end relations
than to mention
possibilities. it is
hard to love you
but harder to not
love you because
there is no chance.
roots grow in this
strange familiar way
and it is an earthquake
every day only you
don't know. how many
people part this way
I don't know but they
do and death parts
pain from forever. so
I can't say when
I'll get to say I love
to marry you as
even death will fall short
of its part. each time
I send you away I wait
for the time again
for you to say
you don't want me to
wait anyway. I wave
as I've waved, don't need
to mind about forever
when forever
is mine.

This City Has No Bicycle Bells

This city has no bicycle bells.

The children of this city talk to their parents, *ring ring*.
Acquaintances are neighbours while friends roam on the Net
and fall off when the wires dog-tripped. Then it's all a black

fog screening over the next few days when the 'puter
is hijacked and the sun is blamed for its peephole performance.
The black jelly skirmishes on the moon's full face

nobody notices. Unlike everywhere else dusk is brighter
than morning and it's Diwali marooned out
in a sea of cubical lighthouses, each flat and house fat

with the echoes of tv. The fathers of this city are slightly
taller than the mothers of this city, who father the sons and
daughters of this city as almost equals; no witchhunt and not many

women who like to wear their hair short. Fitness is diet and diet is
as diverse as the foods of four races but the champion has long been
wealth. Stored in provident funds, in stocks and bonds, or realised

into the bricks of less humble roofs whose owners fumble
the keys to garages, safes, iceboxes and bedtime stories of
success. Here everyone knows education is a thing of beauty but as a child who

learned to pray, worship, economise, share, hope, expect and analyse, always a day
before yesterday – what can I possibly say to an adult who cannot
believe how few things I accomplished today

one of which is this idea I know my part.

It is night and I am still full of words.

Homecoming

Do you know the birds too, start late when the rain falls too early? I heard them coo and tap from high branch to low, the smaller ones need not flap their wings as they are lifted by the wind. Their movements *tcch, tsssh*; secrets bound then bounced off webbed feet. Do you know the dried silver of dead fish is a tad brighter than they swim? I spotted one and walked by but the second one I got to stop. I wanted to share with you a special insight that perhaps the world may pass by *nonchalant*. Its pout on one side stiffened to a still, its beady eye could be a fresh seed or a spoilt gem. The fin flagged its final fling. Not the royal crunch of maggots, the sparse flesh was beginning to draw in a laidback crowd of red-black ants and lazy flies. That's about all you'll get for life in the lake. Oh but that silver! I bite at the likeness of something meek, fearing yet wanting something big.

Do you know the crow is in fact the most devoted bird? She sings of evil and casts the grim scowl, everyone assumes. But the crow always goes back like a beautiful haunting, nursing her young whose first instincts is love. Back home we never shoot down piety but we don't know much to glorify a black bird. In a Chinese home, everything belongs to an altar and more red is more luck. So much has happened to me. *I want to share*. Don't take away the early part. The rain has, this morning.

Bridget-Rose Lee is from Singapore. She is learning from an identity diaspora of what it is to be Chinese, woman, and writing. She hopes to succeed in all three, and still be able to elevate the status of what poetry can mean to a soul that wants to fight, in a young country that once said "poetry is a luxury we cannot afford." Her work has appeared on the *Quarterly Literary Review Singapore*, *Poetry Super Highway* and *Yuan Yang* (University of Hong Kong).