

Patterns

There are patterns here.
Here, there are even

quirks in disappearing.
Once, to get away,

six months into the stay
I met a man who has seen me.

This is some fortune, these verbs
linking what we try to unchain.

This is not meant to be
a confession. Here, there

is no booth. Listen. Here
there is the rustling of

the pages of the notes,
the tempo of the waves

the seabirds carry with them
in their exotic names,

the albatross and petrel,
the ordinary gull,

not to mention the plovers
of New Jersey sticking

their pine-needle beaks
like siphons into east-coast sand.

This has nothing to do with
them. This has nothing to do

with anything at all. This just is
an attempt to understand

what appears random is not
as random as it tends to appear.

Author Bio

Alicia Hoffman currently resides in Rochester, NY where she teaches English at Bishop Kearney High School. After receiving her MA in Poetry from SUNY Brockport, her poems have been published in *Redactions: Poetry and Poetics*, *Red Wheelbarrow*, *Remark*, *Poetry MidWest*, *Flutter*, *The Centrifugal Eye*, *Octaves*, *Poets Against the War*, and *elimaë*. She has recently been nominated for a Pushcart Prize and is psyched to publish a broadside with *Ink Publications*.

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Good Fortune by *Alicia Hoffman*

An Ink Publications Broadside



In Workshops

Katherine speaks of her boyfriend's guitar,
the way the chords of his ribs become

the dissonance between the riffs.
At one point, the instrument hangs

like a cherry blossom between their absence
before it sheds. Caroline is obsessed

with Virginia Woolf. The way her sweaters
button perfect to the cleft of her peach

colored neck is just annoying. Once,
someone wrote the strokes of lightning

took the power out. Within the darkness
of a Chinese Restaurant someone split

a good fortune, lifted their chop-stick
and laughed. Red lipstick. White Teeth.

This is what lingers in the after-flash.
The dilution of color, the fade before

the clear. It is as if I was never there,
which is true, even after the revision

of names and the buffet began to offer
a more diversified selection, though

this is what I would like - to remember
what is never written in stone - the clink

of the glasses unexpected and clamoring
in the dark, the waiters sensed only

by the shush-shush of their starched slacks
rushing by in blackness, the Moo Shoo and

the Kung Pao overwhelming
the voices of strangers rising like steam

from metallic platters, unavoidably
closer now than they ever were before.

Good Fortune

You will come
to know

the language
of stone.

The moon
will cast

its net,
the fishermen

will have
a lucky night

on the sea. The sea
birds will take you

somewhere
near Tian Hou

a silverfish
will reflect

the light from a star,
and like a mirror

you will belly up
with a mouthful

of gray, a smooth
and solid reflection.