

Wilderness House Literary Review 16/3

Brandon Zang
red ink

The art of chinese calligraphy is
not about the accuracy of the writer
but their spirit that is embodied within
every stroke, every dot, and every shape that the writer puts down
and
if you were to see
how a chink writes then you would see a paper dowsed in ink
because a chink in america is
a chink in the armor
of the great globalist nationalist fucking monster that
devours jade jackets and shits out bloody gold
the same goliath who snatched a boy from his village
and took away his brush and replaced it
with a pickaxe and a dynamite
because wouldn't it be beautiful
if we were to write with red ink
that wasn't made from rose petals or some paint factory
but made
from the dark crimson red
of human blood

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If Whales Could Fly

Reckless is the fish who walked out of water
and wary is the whale who returned

the whale is a woman
her arms lined in ruby blood, her feet drenched
in eon mud, tired of waiting
A linen promise enshrouded in earthly mantle
the terrestrial paradise that never came

And in binding her shattered fingers with laurel and cedar strips
tethering her blemished ankles

Went home

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Parasol Metropolis

An auntie once told me
That dark skin belonged to the peasants
Who spent their days under the sun
Their wrinkly faces drenched in sweat
Rolling down their laugh lines into the waters of the rice field
Like tears
And she pointed to the construction workers
Skinny bodies in greasy undershirts
Muttering in dirty dialects, gloved hands
 Towels wrapped
 Around bronze necks
Squinting eyes in the summer

My mother's face was paler
Her yellow-white canvas stretched by wrinkles and scars
Her eyelids droopy from fatigue
Her crooked teeth were whiter than her skin

But I was born with
Peasant skin
Construction worker skin

Rusted copper skin
Patchy and inconsistent
 Like cloudy broth
 That smelt like medicine and ginkgo

I hope I get wrinkles that line my eyes
In a sea of parasols
The skin that belongs to me