

French Doll

by Jennifer Choi

On a *foggy night* at the film festival,
I walk on a *yellow carpet* of crisping ginkgo leaves,
slipping quietly from the *platform of night*.
A little tired, my voice barely a *whisper*.

Cradling a *torn paper bag*,
I wait for the *high-speed train* on the platform,
my life pressed into a *simple, crumpled bag*.
Ready to leave? *Luggage is nothing*, only a light, empty promise.

A garden with no flowers unfolds over my *knees*,
your ears, perfect and neat, but the *paper blanket* feels hollow,
its corners fraying like a *garden that has forgotten its bloom*.
A worn-out *British tabloid* drapes across my lap.

Charles and Diana's wedding—
I read it over and over,
but the *emblem on the white horse* never arrives.
Instead, cars at the *drive-thru* order hamburgers,

Twenty-four hours
of hamburger photos, crispy fries, a *paper cup* smudged with lipstick,
crumpled napkins, bent *plastic straws*—
I will miss them all.

When morning comes,
a young part-timer will find me,
a *paper doll* slouched in a *plastic chair*,
my life as light as paper,

Waiting for a train that never comes.
Wasting time,
proof that I've been here,
on this *dull star*.

My *McDonald's* is still unfinished.