

'I have been to enough of these to know
 we are merely shells in the game.
 People whose identity gets moved from here to here...
 chair to chair ..reading to reading.
 We all sit in silence.
 Witnness her weave her star-like magic
 Are her poems fabulous?
 Or are they fabulous because we hear her read them?
 My friend falls in love and buys two books. Hopes to have
 them
 autographed and waits in line.
 Watches closely as the poet
 signs each one with regal grace.

I am asked to fetch more books and
 dash off eagerly, honored by the task.
 Opening the car door, overwhelmed
 by the sweet scent of spice and onions,
 I wade through bags of garbages.
 An empty wine bottle rolls around
 at my feet, wrappers from a half eaten
 grinder slip through my fingers,
 her children's clothes and toys covering
 the back seat...
 I kneel, breathing in all that is
 the magic of her life.
 I recall the poem she read.

The one about the birds.
 How they fly up and move from spot
 to spot, three feet up to down.
 She read it with such energy
 and amazement.
 Breathing in one last blast of lunch
 and sweat and disaster,
 I gather up her treasures.
 Head back into the library...

Praying someday to be of equal measure .

She arrives in patterned flower pants
 floppy sea green sweater, clogs,
 her hair loose and matted
 beaded woven bracelets
 dancing on her arm.
 Introduces her first poem with the rambling saga
 of her divorce,
 the recent death of her cat,
 how just today she discovered
 a mouse had chewed through
 small wires in the ice maker
 of her mother's old refrigerator...
 Her mother's death
 resurfacing in all that water.
 All of us are flattered when
 she remembers our names.
 Talks to us as if she knows us.
 Or we know her.

THE READING



by

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Origami Poetry Project

THE READING
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