

YESHIM TERNAR

Live Fish

Coming home from school in the fall
some afternoons
I'd run into fishermen
hauling their catch from boats by the banks into
cooler vans
Small fry still jumping
wholesale.
I'd ask to buy a bag.
A shy schoolgirl in uniform, eyeglasses,
wanting fish so badly,
they'd give me some,
and tell me to keep it a secret.
I'd hold that clear plastic bag with fish
twisting and pumping, drops of the sea shifting
from one to another
away from me, my math books, my library novels,
my white shirt, blue uniform.
I'd hold that bag like a lantern, away from my body,
into the future; fish peering at me
from the future.
All I wanted was to give my mother,
myself, my sisters, a gift I'd seen my father
give her to make all of us happy.
In his absence, I tried.
walking home with that sure gift,
I'd watch them all the way up the hill,
mysteries of the sea in a bag,
a holocaust of fish,
a harvest.
and my life's wish
to make peace.

Yeshim Ternar has published a collection of short stories entitled Orphaned by Halley's Comet (Williams Wallace Publishers, 1991). Her poetry and short stories have been published in numerous other magazines, journals, and anthologies.

ALICE AISGILL

talking to mirrors

My name is clairvoyance.
Eyes popping, i stand by mirror.
Looking therein i see:
forests of rusted chains
dangling
singing
verdant hymns to war dead rodents.

Digesting this food for thought,
i look once again
and see magenta mules
supping on victuals from
mass Gallipoli graves.

Now i harbour funereal thoughts
so yet again peer in
and see a sunset
distilled from dew
of the blue grass
of eternal adolescence.

Food for rot. What a reflection
is this, fit for an aged organ,
not visionary intoxication.
One more try as i screw the eye
into that flat glass socket
and see an oddly familiar clock
whose face is mine.

Alice Aisgill is a freelance poet/artiste from Vancouver, B.C. She prefers cats and other animals to most people.