Among The Statues

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Differences
Some say that there is no difference between black and white
I disagree. There is a fundamental difference between all races, all cultures.
Those differences are what makes life so infinitely interesting.
All peoples have pride, roots, ancestry.
That heritage must be celebrated, revelled in, but never dwelt upon.

Racism goes both ways.
Hatred is a free-flowing emotion; impartial and unjust.
Prejudices on the basis of color, race, religion, sex, all are inexcusable.
The past should remain for always a reminder of things past, never a plague for the future.

We have a chance for a new beginning.
There is a difference.
It need not make a difference.

Megan C. Hallam

Daffodils in a Qing Vase
Cut from some entrepreneur’s patch for profit at $2.99 a bunch, they are beautiful nevertheless.
this March morning under an ersatz Tiffany lamp, shockingly yellow to the point of harshness.
Far from the Lake poet’s lake, they are at a dead end, for my enjoyment, poor spirited blossoms.
The wood stove’s glass door reflects their fieriness.
My daughter’s clarinet in another room makes a doleful echo.

How west meets east in perceptible ways as a globe diminishes, China’s farmlands are pruned to golf parks.
a Maine man called Siske sells batiked porcelain dolls named Dara, not knowing Dara in Malay means blood.
name this mismatch what you will, there are the happier joinings of lovers whose mulatto children are adored by them.
if not by others, I know no way to make an easy peace, thinking of Said’s grief for his murdered Palestinians, the ravaged women of Bosnia, mutilated blooms in alien camps.
no felicitous conjunction there but a haunted languishing nameable as agony or blood.
the world moves apace with its unprecedented marryings, spilled oil on sea’s skin and fowl’s wing, all the terrible perfections dreamed up by chemists, all the sufferings inflicted on the animal world, a fly’s head joined to an additional one, a human gene closed to swine’s for leaner meat, how we will meet such intertwining in the years to come.
when I am joined to dust and my daughter’s clarinet mingles with an orchestra beyond my ever hearing, let us pray for faith in some singularities, the beauty one daffodil spreads on a stalk, a Qing vase with a lady in blue painted on a bed of whorled blue clouds, some unitary goodness of the human spirit in every one of us that must surely engender more goodness when made two.

Chin Woon Ping
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Among the Statues
I gather their stories, tiny shards from the edge of frozen tunics, I work to follow the blank whites of their eyes.
And if your heroine or hero weighs in at half a ton, even a shard of their story will be ponderous—echoing marble Latin.
My arms are dark against their flanks of shining white, my plush and paint not worn away by centuries and retellings—
I must have stories as well, easy ones that would still float in salt water, with arms not to crush a lover so simply—
but I fear such lightness, it might indeed ride on my body like fluttering cloth, but without it flesh would shrivel to a dropped leaf, I fear turning to offer my grief to the serious visitors who nod behind lorgnettes, who applaud borrowed names and tragic masks, but who and who, I ask, would pause for my song, merely mortal, such a high-pitched bird its echoes would fade as once in the hollow halls?

Sibelan Forrester

THE SHORE
before anything is remembered
water has already decided never to die
then the blood falls
sealed in white rocks the blood of the sea begins cold and clear as a pair of palms rising a day ahead of us in some places tomorrow arrives lifetimes ago
then the sand falls it climbs the sound of water spiraling inward until it reaches into its color until it covers its blue heart until some morning there is only the shore and the water and the absence of something that came before years there the names fall into the ocean its only claw reaching over the sand toward the peddler of minds who waits with his wares draped in the sun counting the shape of water all along the coast destinies set out towards him knowing only the sound of the sea.

Sam Tay.