Autobiography of My Hungers

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tongue

My only girlfriend in college is a Chinese immigrant and when we tossed around in bed I told her we were all beans and rice, my Spanish seasoning her Mandarin. She would roll her eyes and kiss me. She said there was no need for a condom at the peak of her period and my semen mixed with her blood and we never made a baby, though my father wanted me to bring one home one day. But every single sweaty effort got wiped off our bodies and flushed down the toilet.

“Will you marry me?” I asked her more than once, imagining my family’s joy at bringing a girl to them. Not a blonde and not American, not really, but a pretty, fair-skinned girl, nonetheless, just like my dear departed mother. Every time she answered my proposal with an emphatic “no.”

“Is it our families?” I finally said in exasperation. “Is it because you can’t speak with mine and I can’t speak with yours?”

My girlfriend laughed. “You know why,” she said, coyly.

I did know. It wasn’t the tongues we had but the tongues we wanted. She needed a man’s. And so did I.