

JENNIFER FENN

The Soaring Dove: A Haibun

Hope and I drive out of the Islamic Center parking lot after learning how Muslims are still persecuted in America. Hope speaks first. “After camp, they called me dirty Jap”.

guns always pointing,
sharp barbed wire ready to poke,
words jabbed like knives.

Two years at Topaz, freezing in tarpaper barracks, she was fed only beans.

mess halls, long lines, beans
slopped on plates like they were pigs
coming up to troughs.

In the buffet restaurant, we pile our plates high with crunchy lettuce, crisp cucumbers, juicy tomatoes, bright carrots, creamy blue cheese and salted sunflower seeds. I get out my wallet. “No”, Hope says. “My treat.”

buried in hard snow
or under the hostile heat,
this orchid still grew.

At the table, we talk music. “In college, a professor said my ears were too Asian to play the violin!” I shake my head. If only he could hear her and her students now!

despite cats in yards,
doves built nests in high branches
cooing calls like song.

Later, we perform Christmas music at a senior living place, Hope on violin, her husband on string bass, and I on piano. Her joyful notes fill the room, rising out the windows.

above the stable,
the dove on the Christmas card
soars into real life!

Jennifer Fenn’s poems have appeared in fourteen different journals, both in print and online, including *Song of the San Joaquin*, *Faces of the Goddess*, *National Catholic Reporter*, *Time of Singing*, and *Brevities*. She is now putting together a chapbook called *Blessings* as a fundraiser for her church.