

BRANDI KARY

Conversations with a Drum

We are on a train to Xian—the belly of the country. We talk of dreams, dreams and broken glass, but always dreams. We stop to stare out the window at the moving picture of white goats sprinkled on top of green hills. You fiddle with the rim of your teacup. You tell your story. Your eyes widen then fall into their natural slopes. I listen to you, committed. I am in love.

The train stops. Passengers exit. Most are from the standing section. They hold crickets in bone cages and white peppered eggs wrapped in wax paper. A man clutches a rooster with a feathered green neck. To have a seat on the train is a luxury and we know this silently.

We are moving again. We talk about dreams.

“And then what happened?” I ask. “To what?” you reply. “In the dream, what happens?” I ask. “It ends like most dreams end... it ends in fragments, but it gets clearer each time. Like a click of a microscope.” You hold up her thumb and index finger in a little circle. You lean closer. Your breath tickles my forearm. I want to swallow you here, on the train, in front of everyone.

“After the dream my sister called to tell me my father died on his couch holding the remote. The television was on, the house was dark.”

A man interrupts you to ask for tickets. He rips the corner of each one with a long yellow fingernail and speaks in Mandarin. You exchange a nod.

“Most dreams do not end that way,” I say. “Of course they do,” you say.

Brandi Kary is a mother, educator, and writer who lives in Pacific Grove, California. She currently teaches English and Creative Writing at Monterey Peninsula College. Both she and her anthropologist husband enjoy dragging their kids all over the world to gain inspiration. Her poetry has recently appeared in *Flutter Poetry Journal*, *Calliope Magazine* and *Throwaway Poetry* blog. She was recently accepted to Cambridge University and will spend the summer of 2014 writing in England.