

Poetry Porch: Poetry

Audrey

By Thomas DeFreitas

I'm calling you Audrey
because you look like an Audrey
but you might be a Cindy or an Elizabeth

I'm that fellow who was riding the Red Line
at 6:43 a.m. last Tuesday
I was wearing my navy-blue Lands' End jacket
with a mustard-yellow Mayor Pete button
& scanning the train for a vacant seat
that didn't have anyone next to it

when you stood beside me
with one small fist clutching the subway-car strap
& you struck up a convo
about Thai food & snarky baristas
& your cousin Gretchen
who thinks that toothpaste is the devil
& your uncle Keith who likes his gin martinis

I was charmed by your unobtrusive nose-ring
& by the purple-paintbrush overhang of hair
that covered your left eyebrow

You told me all about
your small town in the Dakotas
its arid hectares of moralism
its brittle miles of twisted scripture

how ready you were to kick rocks at sixteen
& find diversity & hail science
& gobble three-dollar pretzels
& connect with a boy who loved neo-soul
& cuddle with a girl who rescued stray kittens

I was magnetised
by the way you said “noggin” instead of “head”

I was delighted by your horn-rimmed glasses
making you look like a millennial female Clark Kent
quirky and instagrammable

I was captivated by the way you waved
when you got off the train at Charles/MGH
to start another day of your fascinating life
of blue lipstick & grey paperwork
of tuna salad in Tupperware
of studious podcasts & flurries of bisexual laughter