

KIOSK MADE OF WHISPERS

SHARON SUZUKI-MARTINEZ

A man once crossed the road
to put lip balm on his bill
but that is another story.
The man crosses the road
for the kiosk on the other side.
A kiosk made of whispers.
A man seeks
a vial of insinuations
and this is the best place
outside of Nantucket.
Everyone knows that
including the priest, the rabbi and
the duck
but those are different stories.
The man wants more zing
in his pear-shaped world
but is ill-equipped for debauchery.
Inside the kiosk, a shadow flutters
towards a man who rises
as smoke from the fire
of another story.

ALWAYS (THAT ASSHOLE APHRODITE) ALAS

Always she has her honeyed ways.

Her come-hither

and thither. Her flashing butterfly

knives and other insidious
whimsies. Her fire

and brimming cups of Molotov coquetry. Her wild

duck and cover songs (o annihilating
dithyrambs of love). Her trouser-
pressed flowers from the sun-stroked

South Pacific (o not the musical).

And because nothing beats

the gift of pants (paired blatantly with

her latex sly-boots) I could not sway

your razzle-dazzled heart or

your dancing brown sugar eyes Alas.

ON FIRE

I'm lying when I tell you I'm not
trying to seduce you
in this poem or any other poem.

Even now, I've got you
following my call
down the wrong alley
then waltzing across a forest all afire.

You melt through my hands like time
but I want you to be
my river. You are my river—

so cool and smooth and strong and
I'm nothing
but a lost little duck on fire.
Wondrously, only your attention will save me.