

“Empty Mugs”

*by Dynn Javier*

I’m not sad enough to be a good poet. My line breaks always rest on thoughtful moments tinted with good intentions, slanted on bad behavior. Otherwise, it’s a sham.

Like how I used to not be able to tell the difference between good coffee and bad coffee. Liking it black--to impress my dad--was my first problem. I got really used to drinking battery acid and chewing up tar even though my teeth always stayed white. When the bitter phantoms got to coating my throat I would think, “I feel good, and I’m a good person.” My internal rhyme is all fucked up, but that’s okay, because if bad things happen to good people then that means I’m going to heaven straightaway. I sip again. The first time I remember drinking coffee was after church one Sunday, back when my mom still made me go to church. Though I didn’t really enjoy it until I found the need to drink it black.

I’m a good person and a bad poet, and that makes me sad. But not enough, I guess. I sip again, slurping really loudly because the smaller droplets allow me to taste the coffee better. To depend on the bitterness. Notes of burnt almonds, apricots. Strong aftertaste. Weak body. My internal rhyme is all fucked up. “You drink your coffee black?” one of my parents ask. (I don’t know which one.) “He likes it that way.” the other one says. But that’s okay, I guess. I’m going to heaven straightaway. I sip again.