



A visual representation of "Rain Scene" by Collier Nogues

Rain Scene

Collier Nogues

for Opal, and for Hong Kong, the city she'll grow up in

Sheltered by the white-tiled park overhang,
I watch you run in nonstop loops. You've found
a shallow soup-bowl where a tree was planted once
but didn't take. Its surviving neighbor trees, each
in their own soup, quiver in the light rain
while you stomp, soaking the socks I'll soak again
tonight to leach from them their rust-red mud.
Of course I remember the pleasure this is.

This isn't the color my mud was. Mine
was white, limestone ground down to river clay
and rife with flint and fossils. At every flood
we found dead things risen with the water.
In case the road washed out we had the truck,
and when the creek rose past truck-axle-height,
my father drove the tractor to the highway
and hitched a ride to get more milk.

More milk here takes merely a walk
down to the Circle K, whose clerk knows you
and says hello. Hello you say to her, or if she says
jòu sàhn, you say jòu sàhn. Jòu sàhn, says the fruit stand man
who offers you an orange. You take words in
and give them back, but sometimes changed: orange
becomes ocean—because of cháang, I think—
which in our family now describes both fruit and sea.

The sea comes very near the fruit stand, surging in
on Lam Tsuen River's tide from Plover Cove,
but the watercourse is paved and engineered, no chance
of flood no matter how the rain comes down. My mother
would have liked that, would have liked the refuge
this city makes, the care its people take to greet
each other. Thank you for the ocean, you say to the man.
What she would have made of you, I wonder.

I wonder where her heaven is. Far from my father's,
surely. Or near, in that for both of them, just as for me,
you are every heaven's anchor. I am glad we've anchored here,
where I watch you watching for snails, the giant ones
who come out in the rain, bigger than the ocean you've forgotten
in your awe, are those its hands you ask and no, I say,
they are a kind of eyes, a kind which can bear water.
Some creatures, even cities, make their own shelter.

The poem was first published on the Writing Plus website as
part of the Urban Love Poetry Contest for the 2020 Hong Kong
International Literary Festival Schools Programme:
<https://www.writingplus.hk/urban-love-poem-2020>,
reprinted with the permission of the poet.



Zheng Zhiyu

St. Stephen's Church College



The poem shows a mother watching her child in a rain scene. Sometimes I walk alone in the rain, with my umbrella shielding me from the downpour. I cannot help but feel a sense of loneliness in the midst of Hong Kong's bustling crowds. That is why I chose to paint myself alone in my artwork, without any other people around.

Inspired by the joy and warmth expressed in the poem, I came to realise that despite the melancholy, there can be something soothing and positive about the rain. I begin to find solace in the peaceful sound of raindrops hitting the pavement, and in the reflection of the city's lights on the wet road surfaces.

As the sky begins to change from grey to pink and orange, I am reminded of the beauty that can be found around us in everyday life. Twilight in Hong Kong is truly a magical time, and I feel grateful to be able to witness it.



Positive value(s) and attitude(s):

Hope

Positive message(s):

Through my artwork, I hope to convey the message no one will walk in the rain alone forever. There is someone out there who can share this moment with us and we just need to be hopeful and grateful.