

Real Time by Jennifer Wong

Today he'll grow a plant for her,
Of unknown species. Doesn't matter. He can go
And read a magazine, wait till it blossoms.

She came back from work. Tired legs. There's a run in her stockings
That showed. She pulled them off and
Went over to the other side of the room,
Petting her cat. She's allergic to animals but,
It's a neat creature. Doesn't smell, doesn't even purr.

Mother of four and with a small flat full of outfits getting old,
She's not into shopping anymore. When she isn't at the mahjong table
She plays baking cakes. It's a pleasure,
Not getting stuck doing the dishes afterwards.

By day he's plain enough, well hidden in his cave
Of boring files and documents. At night he tuned in perfectly,
Dedicated his favourite song to a stranger,
Thrilled by an ocean trawl of
Lost acquaintances, alumni, coworkers,
Anyone willing to play a game of scrabble.

With a lump of sad love in her throat she received
Daily updates of his habits and the book he's reading.
She looked at the moon, drew graffiti on his wall,
Hoping he'd understand.

With flight delayed and nothing to do in the terminal,
He sent the wife a mooncake, postage free.
Adjacent to him another business traveler,
Who might or might not have been to China, logged on to
Save the Pandas network and signed a petition.

Insomniac territory
That you stepped into, here you can rock the boat,
Patch up a quarrel, or fall in love.
Some find it harder to keep a secret
Or dodge the paparazzi.

Who knows?
What you said or what she put on Facebook this minute
Might go into a gallery, just like Campbell soups.

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