

Grub

by Winston Wang

The grime of smoke stains paper nests,
drones intoxicated by soot.
Hardened stovewood strikes dents and the hive dislodges,
splitting upon concrete earth,
revealing honeycomb
if honey was cloudy larval fluids gleaming off pulsating young,
that writhe and squish like pus blisters
as callus gnarled fingers
dig and dump onto nonstick Teflon.

Flame licks stainless steel and fumes rise
as squirming curls to twitch.
Blackened wood spatula sautes plump larvae,
white like rice and maggots,
alongside the semi-formed chitin of pupae
that shrivel and crisp until browned
in Kirkland and Kikkoman
vegetable oil and soy sauce.
A pinch of salt and sugar sprinkled evenly
as the pan rises then jerks
and sizzling grubs momentarily fly,
wafting seared scrambled eggs scent.

Served over white rice,
chopsticks raise heaps of grub to anticipate tongue,
devour with a gulp and a smack of the lips,
which part for a second bite.
Pupae crunch between molars and umami dribbles
from halted metamorphosis.
Like egg fried rice
with extra protein.