

spacecraftprojects

we are all astronauts

worlds
kate bernheimer

“The White Fox”

I stood on a city street in a crowd. I faced a balcony on a two-story building or house. The girl on the balcony was pretty and small. She resembled the other girls in the city (the solitary girls). She wore a dress that fell to the calf. She held a blender and brandished it as if in a play, though this was real life. She was proclaiming or announcing that she was going to put a girl in the blender – but just part of her. Just part of the girl. There was blood in the blender that was a shade of bright red. The blender was around a third of the way filled. The blood splashed in the blender up to its rim, as the girl waltzed around the balcony. She talked about what she was going to do to the girl.

In an announcer’s voice, with a theatrical tone, she said “NOW we shall put the GIRL in the blender! NOW we shall blend the GIRL!” The girl who was going to be put in the blender was not there but there was the essence of her. It may have been that only her hands

would be dipped into the blender. Nevertheless, the clear implication was that the limbs would be blended. It next was revealed that the girl who would be getting put into the blender, though she was not there, would have her back to the blender while all of this happened: “The GIRL will be blended with her BACK to the blender!”

The girl who was pacing the balcony and who was the announcer gestured toward the balustrade of the balcony. There the girl who would be blended would stand with her arms held behind her back. Then she – or merely her hands – would be placed in the blender. Perhaps only the hands. The mechanics of all this was unclear. I felt uneasy and looked around but no one else seemed disturbed. I was terrified.

I had escaped. I walked along a forest path that was beautiful. There were lots of low trees. It was snowy but the trees were in bloom. Covered in pink peonies. There were also very large peony blossoms – pale pink – floating around in the air. Each one was cut in half (severed). They were not really in the shape of peony flowers so much as heads of iceberg lettuce only more heart-shaped than those. They floated in pairs – that is, each half was together with the other half of the blossom. I was trying to get home through the peony

forest. I was barefoot in snow. I was not the small, pretty girl from the balcony but I thought about her.

Eventually I passed by a white fox and thought she was pretty. She stood a good distance away looking at me. I stared at her warily as I walked in the snow. I could not take my eyes off of her. When I was a distance past the pretty white fox, she ran after me and put her teeth on the calf. With her teeth on the calf, I walked faster and faster and I could not shake her off. She followed me and kept putting her mouth around the calf with the teeth ready to bite. I was terrified.

At last I got to an office that was long and narrow, with a brass, gilded door with a window inside of the door – a sort of storefront. I stood at the storefront or office. A man faced me at a desk (he was behind it). He was the person I had to speak to about the fox, because without the fox being taken indoors by its owner, I could not make it home without being hurt. I told the man this. He consulted his papers and then cleared his throat. He told me he could not reach the white fox's owner until later because the girl who owned the white fox was a "Fox Man," which meant she worked in fields of some nature with foxes till dark. The girl was a girl but she was also a Fox

Man. So I either, the man told me, would have to walk home through the peony forest and risk getting mauled, or I could wait. I was terrified.