Asparapocalypse

Terry Trowbridge

Author's Note

The poem imagines a cliché conflict between a parent and a child over eating asparagus. It capitalizes on the idea of telling a kid they can't leave the table until they try a bite of yucky food. It takes a twee turn toward the genre of horror by making allusions to the catacombs beneath Egyptian pyramids. The poem attempts to be either a vague monster movie shadow, or a Sesame Street style joke. As parents, we've all tried to walk an edgy-cute line, making allusions but staying creatively fun, even while exasperated.

Terry Trowbridge is a PhD student in Socio-Legal Studies at York University, in Toronto. His poems have appeared in many literary journals in the USA and Canada, as well as scholarly journals like The Canadian Journal of Family and Youth, Canadian Woman Studies, American Mathematical Monthly, The Journal of Humanistic Mathematics.

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Kid...

One asparagus
is not so bad to eat
if you think about who
it came from.

This one was the tail
of a manticore
whose guardian mane
was made of artichoke

radiating his bushy chlorophyll
at the door of the
museum of vegetable antiquities.

That's the school field trip
for the kids who
still refuse to *try just one*
even long after the Sun is down
and everyone is gone to bed

and there is sand creeping
over the silent doorstep,
no more lights, the malachite faded
from their doll's eye shadow,
the dolls all laid in rows
in the hidden hallways
of the food pyramid.