



A visual representation of "At the Daipaidong" by Kate Rogers

Tang Yik Yan
St. Paul's Co-educational College



“

I used a dark colour tone to express the loneliness of the speaker. It shows that the speaker misses her home and her mother. Hope is also reflected in the lights shining in the daipaidong in the evening. The sky consists of red, velvet and blue, which suggests that it is the dawn of a new day and rays of hope are forthcoming.

In my artwork, the speaker and her mother are sitting next to each other surrounded by both Hong Kong and Ukrainian food. This creates a warm, caring and artistic ambience. According to the poem, the speaker is very close to her mother, who cooks a lot of different traditional cuisines for her. I believe the speaker recalled the food her mother cooked for her when she ate at daipaidong in Hong Kong. Therefore I drew Hong Kong buildings and food on the left and Ukrainian food on the right. They represent two different worlds in which the speaker has lived in.

”

Positive value(s) and attitude(s):

Hope

Positive message(s):

Treasure our family and express hope for the future.

Noodles bite me back
with garlic and chilli,
singe my palate.
Take that, yearning tongue,
they whisper as they slither by.
Dumplings fold plump hands
in their laps.

At night I dream of pinching shut
the gaping mouths of perogies²,
stuffed not with pork and leek,
but cheese curds and sauerkraut³.
They dive into boiling water
to do somersaults.

Chow fan⁴ could easily fill cabbage rolls:
Those Holubsti⁵ my mother made
to line my winter stomach.
Char Siu⁶ is as sweet
as the crackling on her pork roast.

If she were here she'd say,
Don't talk with your mouth full.
It isn't clear what language
You are speaking.

She grips English syllables
carefully between her teeth—
enunciates each morsel of sound.

The instrument I hold by the throat
in Tom Lee's Music
looks like an Er-hu⁷,
but could have been a mandolin.
There may be eight tones, or nine.
In Cantonese, words are sung
more than said.

Mother didn't want me to learn
the language of her childhood.
In Ukrainian my only phrase is,
Ya ne znayu: я не знаю⁸:
I don't know.

"At the Daipaidong" was published in *Foreign Skin* by Kate Rogers, p.27. Copyrights© 2015 by Kate Rogers. Reprinted by permission of the poet.

¹ a casual street restaurant

² Ukrainian or Polish dumplings

³ sour fermented cabbage

⁴ fried rice

⁵ cabbage rolls stuffed with rice and meat

⁶ Cantonese roast pork marinated in a sweet sauce

⁷ a traditional Chinese two-stringed musical instrument

⁸ Cyrillic script for "I don't know."