

St. Mark

By Ari Noble

Above your head
Two girls spoke.
Their faces were pink and young with girlhood,
Their hair, glossy, sable,
Reflected smooth restaurant
Light, yellow and warm.
One of them was looking into a mirror
And the other leaned over a sink,
Also pink,
Her hip was on the wall,
her lips were parted
And they were talking to each other in Spanish.
You were saying something and I
Couldn't hear you over their conversation.

Are they in love or are they friends, do you think?
I asked you with my mouth full.
My tongue was hot and swollen with spice.
You licked tea off the rim of the cup,
Sweet chai, thick with milk.
Soon it was gone.

Paper lanterns snaked their way through the bar next-door,
A long, skinny room that let off a hot red glow into the night
Like a cloud of warm breath.
We looked in through the window and shivered.
On the porch you talked quickly
As if these words had been in you for
Some time,
Always on your tongue,
Ready to jump.
Sometimes I can't stand you.