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Two on a Rickety Bicycle

David Kramer

Hey, thanks. Let me show you the house.

The ruse of the forgotten pen

From when they exchanged numbers that evening at Jeremiah's.

Her children now at home with her sister

Eating Reeses and Nestles Crunch.

Look, senorita, a Cuban flag bought last August

When Obama established diplomatic ties.

Going to fly it right next to the American flag

On Independence Day.

Up against a certain wall,

Back to a certain chair,

Her on my lap,

Leftover Halloween candy,

In a bowl on the table.

The Healthy Relationships Seminar done.

Skylarking home on the Canal Path

Under a purple evening sky

Making purple water.

Two Asians on a rickety bicycle.

The same two as before and before.

He gangly with glasses, in back.

She, perched almost on his lap, in front.

Pleasant, short, more plain than not.

The same couple, for years now, swooning and looping
The Canal Path, the Lehigh Valley Trail, the Genesee Parkway,
Riverside and inland.
He whispering to her in Chinese
Or Talagog. Or Esperanto.
Or is it even words?

The single encounter at the municipal tennis courts
That is not me watching them on their bicycle.
The cheap used yard sale rackets,
The found balls fuzzless and soggy,
Black socks and Walmart tennis shoes.

“Hey, I think I’ve seen you guys on your bicycle.”
The returned stare as blank as this page before I started.
“Do you go to school here?”
We grew up in China.
My husband grad student in Electric Engineering.
Live in Whipple Park.
Back to forehands and backhands
Plinking into the net.

Divorces are always messy.
Irresolution, fainted reconciliations.
Hers especially so with citizenship issues. My own joint custody.
Four homes now and four mortgages

Funny, she and I never have played tennis like that
The way we'd talked about.