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April 23, 2017

Bridge 3

PUFY IS1: Memory

Instructor Carrington Alvarez

陌生人在湿混凝土上

(The Stranger on the Wet Concrete)

A neighborhood with thumbprints of generations. Street vendors on every corner. The colors, fonts, drawings, language and signs are infinite. The colors red and yellow are recurring in the culture. Cheers to the graffiti boys who make my day with their art and dedication. The once bright and glowing neon signs, the friendly shop-keepers and all of the street vendors, the lonely migrants; all vanished, with no such trace of anything. A city silence like no other, a day in Chinatown.

The store is lit in a faint fluorescent purple light, even more noticeable with the grey outside that threatens to bring down God’s wrath upon this town at any moment. Freshly killed ducks lay in the store front. All of the shelves have Chinese snacks labeled ‘Product of China’, except the American ‘Club’ and ‘Honey Maid’ crackers. One of the snack boxes is strawberry flavored cookies. I think to myself, ‘Am I hungry? I sure am’.

$4.99 a pound! That’s an expensive fruit. It’s a dark, hot pink color with light green, almost yellow stems coming out of it from all sides. It looks like a Pokémon.  I think it’s a dragon fruit. The insides of the store, the black and white interior, are contrasted by its loud exterior. I walk past a sign. What are ‘roll eggs’? Are they like egg rolls? If it’s sold ‘inside China mainland only’, what is it doing in Chinatown? You find the craziest stuff in Chinatown.

The odor of the dead fish, mixes in the scent of decay that envelops Chinatown and I find myself questioning what brought me here in the first place? Fish who never were able to die of natural deaths, instead spend their last material moments in this world as a frozen husk of themselves, carved out of the ‘tasty’ bits and their extinguished souls.

The beauty in Chinatown isn’t the buildings or the people, the acreage of the land, the lively neighborhood and environment; but with such a rainfall, you truly see the stranger ugly surface this area is able to hide with glitz and makeup, just like a ridiculously cheap prostitute. We spend our lives being ripped apart by outside forces and brawls until we spend our final days as just a shell of who we used to be. I rock my Yankee fitted cap, a red coat, and Timberlands. I rezone and think to myself; I know where I’m from.