

Amy Soricelli

The Flaca Diaries #19

When Hector won Money in Melrose

When he won the lottery at first they all joked.
They said Hector would spend most of it at the sneaker store
up on Fordham Road.
They said he waited weeks before anyone found out.
He stayed by his mother's house in Washington Heights; ordered pizza,
and slept late.
A few days in, the slow smell of roasted pork worked its way up
from the first floor, where the broken bikes were piled-up
from when there was a lock on the door.
Everyone could tell Hector's mother came into something good.
She walked around her block with a smoother edge.
Her fear looked different, arranged on top of her head in a bun.
When a car would backfire, she didn't wake up in the middle of the night
with her hands flat-out, waiting for the street sounds
to become something more.
Even her phone was better with speed-dial set for anything.
Hector's baby sister started doing her hair from the lady down
the street by their cousins house.
She had all the good stuff from the real salons you can send-away
for from the internet.
She wanted to get her lashes done, but Hector said he didn't need her
turning into something else;
that she could stay who she was but have better shoes.
Some days he would walk into the phone store on the corner
and they'd pull out the best ones from behind the glass.
A few of them stood around, watching him in case he bolted.
The people at the lottery office told him to be quiet about the money.
That he might want to consider moving very soon.
"You know, to a place with less incidents of crime ".
Hector rolled that around in his mouth for a while.
Almost had it inked across his arm.
Hector used some of it to get one of his boys 'pops' out of jail in
time for Christmas.
Only time Hector saw him cry.
Even when his dog got hit by that car, he stayed strong.
He started paying him back in five dollar bills wrapped
around a Pepsi can.
Hector didn't buy a new car but he got his mother a complete
bedroom set with the additional overhead mirror.
He picked it from the Ethan Allen place near Parkchester.
Told them to set it up for her too.

He gave each of them a twenty dollar bill and a beer.
When the picture of him finally made it into the paper, he was smiling
from his Yankees cap, turned around on his head.
All the pins of his favorite numbers across the top.
His arm was around his mom and his sister, and he wore a gold cross
around his neck.
His aunt Daisy gave it to him when he finished high school.
She was waiting for them in the car.
They were all going to City Island to eat some food.
None of them went there before.
It was on him.

Amy Soricelli has been published in numerous publications and anthologies including *Dead Snakes*, *Corvus Review*, *Deadbeats*, *Long Island Quarterly*, *Voice of Eve*, *The Long Islander*. *Sail Me Away* (chapbook) Dancing Girl Press, 2019. Nominated by Billy Collins for Emerging Writer's Fellowship 2019 and for Sundress Publications "Best of the Net" 2013. Recipient of the Grace C. Croff Poetry Award, Herbert H. Lehman College, 1975.