Fortune Cookie

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FORTUNE COOKIE
ASHLEY PHAM

1 girl in the family
2 story house
3 mom says, “never take a photo of three” the person in the middle will die first
4 is unlucky too
5 first day of Catholic school
6 she is given a friend, Pepsi
7 is lucky
8 taunted and tripped during recess “chinita, chinita”
9 she is Vietnamese
10 transferred to gifted and talented education almost everyone has black hair
11 she starts to play the violin, joins choir and pentathlon, steals from the book fair
12 on the bus home, no one wants to sit next to the white girl
13 she is as young and happy as the flowers on her commencement dress
14 school, tennis practice, homework, sleep, repeat
15 school, tennis practice, service events, teach Bible school, homework, repeat
16 constantly asked “what college do you want to go? “what do you want to be?” she can’t decide
17 her name decorated with honors
18 six hours from home, she lives in a dorm
19 she feels sentenced to mediocrity for being placed into pre-algebra
20 on the bus home, no one wants to sit next to the white girl
21 she feels sentenced to mediocrity for being placed into pre-algebra
22 one where she feeds her parents her grades, on track for summa cum laude, the one about all the friends she’s made, and she goes to church every Sunday night
23 but every Sunday night she is tired from being in the library all day; she never mentions to her family that the one Christian service she attended was better than any Catholic mass; she eats instant ramen in her room, only out of fear of publicly eating alone; the pounds she hates herself for putting on are from the forgetful Friday nights.
24 Little fortune cookie, she breaks herself, just to be the bearer of good news.