

Senbazuru

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Do you know the meaning
Of 1000 paper cranes?
A thousand years of happiness,
A good luck charm,
A wish to be granted, or
The gift of eternal good health.

A colorful sheet of squared paper becomes a mystical creature,
Waiting to join its remaining allies,
 To unite their powers of magic.

Dedication and patience from folding
Strengthens the mind, and gives
The creator a reward she deserves
As she summons
The enchanting bird.

At the break of dawn, multi-colored squares surround me
Under this sole cherry blossom lost in a sea of Oaks,
Is where I feel at home.

“Look at that girl wearing the blood red kimono.
This is America, you’re no longer in China.” I would hear each day.
“I’m Japa-“
 “Same thing, you chink,” they’d interrupt.

Cross-legged beneath this sole tree,
Fighting back tears as I’m endlessly folding.
Papercuts here, and papercuts there.

Anticipation takes the form of tiny droplets
Dripping down my face as I finish the last one.
Where are you? Where’s my wish?
There’s no crane, there’s no magic, just me.

The moon peeks through a cloud.
There’s a stillness in the air. No laughing, no mocking.

I tie the last one to the tree then I lie down and face the stars,
Taking in the chirping crickets, and the chill of the quiet breeze.

Tomorrow is another day.

Adolphus Lee Poetry Contest, Third Place Award, 2013 Literary Arts Festival,
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Cite as: Chen, C. (2015). Senbazuru. *City Tech Writer*, 10, 43. Online at
<https://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu/city-tech-writer-sampler/>