

What We Give

by Jill Chan

Oh, what jealousy does to us!

What love does to the living!

It is a completion of something, of anything!

Love, bring me something real, something damned like death, like breath.

God, please forgive us the things we need and could want.

To set myself at peace, I just think that my husband and I were great. Our relationship was great, exclusive. He never was unfaithful. But sometimes we are not sure. It's like looking at clouds in the sky. We see what patterns we want to see.

When I was a child of four, I was riding in the car with my mother. The car was going fast and I suddenly looked up at the sky. Do you know what I saw? I saw the countenance of Jesus in the cloud formation above us.

"Mama, look!" I pointed at the sky with a huge grin on my face.

My mother didn't say anything. In the next second, she was smiling and nodding to me in a look of agreement, apart from consideration but of fact, of truth.

It was like that, like something indefinite, both likely and unlikely.

It is like love. It is like mistaking lust for love. Something big and inexplicable. Or desire, or caring. Something precious.

Then the next thing comes along and you let go of the past like lightning, like sky. The presence of heaven on earth, unseemly yet true, yet real.

But to tell you the truth, I'd been thinking of being unfaithful. The temptation was great.

My friend's boyfriend had revealed to me his frustration regarding his lover. He thought she was being unfaithful to him with my husband.

He wanted revenge; I wanted peace. There's something peaceful about vengeance! At least there was something. Better than tension,

silence, and indecision.

We almost did it. I'm ashamed to report.

We couldn't even do it, take revenge.

But we decided that what we give was given us. To us.

We did nothing.

