

menu poems

If poets wrote menus,
we who eat in restaurants
would be a little happier.

black cod with miso (gin dara saikyou yaki)

4 fillets of silver cod, sexy cod,
O lovely sable slabs.

1 cup or less of sweet rice wine,
the best of what you have.

2 cups miso paste, and taste,
of course, both yours and mine,

and what we know of sweet
or long-fermented things.

An idea, then. Some sugar.
A flaky fish, a solid fish,

a plate and nothing fickle.
And for garnish: ginger, pickled.

gary j. whitehead

For starters:

I'll repeat it again, louder and louder:
Nothing compares with our New England chowder.

"Where's the beef?" the candidate asked
in a pre-election debate.
If he'd eaten here, he'd know at a glance,
It would be right there on his plate.

When our chef starts out on his working day,
He empties each shelf in the pantry,
He names his first dish "une belle entree,"
But we like to call it "an entry."

henry foner

dr. spooner writes the menu

from FEG:
Stupid
Poems for
Intelligent
Children,
Little, Brown

To begin:
Marinated parts of harm.
And then, if lunch,
A chilled grease sandwich,
Or, if dinner,
Brightly leaded chalk pops.
And to drink:
A nice hot mug of hose rip tea
Or a nice bold class of gear.
And for dessert
May we suggest
Our truly delicious
Fresh true fart.

robin hirsch

branch of plum blossoms, hot and sour soup of many days

Soup is most properly taken after the meal,
lifted to the lips and drunk
down to the dregs or the last rice grains.
Then you should cry out,

"Oh life!" and once again, "Oh life!"
under the flowering plum tree.
But perhaps you're in Detroit,
seated at some hole-in-the-wall restaurant,

and all you have are menu pictures to guide you,
a bowl of warmth still hollowing your hands.
Still, you should cry out,
"Oh life!" and once again, "Oh life!"
the waiter coming to your side
from behind his folding screen partition
to see what you want now.

dick allen

**they
used to
let me
do the
dishes
in exchange
for oatmeal
at the
anodyne cafe**

and the oatmeal there was gorgeous,
I must say, boiled not in water but in
apple juice, and mixed with craisins,
walnuts, pears, and crisp wild rice.
It came with a pitcher of cream and a
mound of brown sugar, and though

I can certainly pay for my breakfast
today, and though my life is planned
around another dream, I'd gladly stand
in suds and steam all morning scrubbing
mocha rings from other people's mugs
if I could hold a bowl of it again in
dishpan hands alone, a volume of poems
open at my elbow, 43rd Street dirty
through the dirty window, and all

the oatmeal a guy can eat, warm and
sweet, and each bite scented by
the dish detergent pungent in
the wrinkles in my fingers.

todd boss

Poems on menus? I have enough trouble
reading what's to eat, burning myself
with the table candle
trying to get enough light on the four point type. My
poem would go something like:
If u cn rd ths yr 2 yng to affrd ths pla

doug magee



true

Our friend's son
is he autistic?
he is unusual,
appealing, in his 20's now,
has collected takeout menus
all his life. when he sees
anyone, his first question
is always do you have
menus for me.

esther cohen



**first
menu**

If my entire
grammar school class
was completely present,
for thirty days
in a row, we had
a free half day.

My mother's reward:
lunch at Far East Chinese Restaurant
of New Haven, where
bound black menu, red pages, golden letters,
to a third grader from a small town
seemed all worldly possibilities.
We ate Jewish forbidden
foods, always the same:
shrimps soaked in white lobster sauce
covered in
bright green polka dot peas,
sweet and sour pork with yellow pineapple
chunks,
one bright red maraschino cherry.

esther cohen

ALIMENTUM

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