Junk Drawer Soliloquy

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Junk Drawer Soliloquy

CURTIS VAN DONKELAAR

We have a matchbook souvenir, one decked out in primary colors, etched with a sensuous Jamaican shoreline. It marks the wedding we had near steel drums and the Roasted Nut Man’s cart on a Tuesday, because Sunday was Easter, Monday April Fool’s, and the delay was probably better for our effervescent memories.

We keep the matchbook in a kitchen drawer, usually, mixed up with the tape measure and the thumbtacks, and a rubber doily for gripping our stubborn jars of spaghetti sauce. I bet it’s lounging with them now, laid back and cool, under an old box of adhesive picture-hangers.

Maybe it says something that we gave it a mundane home, something like:

This folded, yellow, cardboard square has an ignition surface on one side, a black strip of coarseness, like your unshaven legs, or my craggy beard at nine in the evening, after we’ve had our dinner, and you’ve begun to correct all those papers that open, “My paper is about.”

or it says:

This single strip of post-consumer waste is one solid thing, an almost Mobius bend tucked under a glittery staple, shining and sharp as the wicked knives I slide through red flesh and meringue-white fat, scooping out those pale, strange globules, the glands no one wants.
in an apple pork chop.

maybe it says:

Inside this fold are cornrows of little men and women built from cheap, black pulp, their round little heads smelling of sulfur, and if you introduce the members of this mute congregation to the harshness that surrounds them you get quick heat, or maybe you get nothing for your effort.