

After the boy from my history class  
threw orange juice at me, he said,  
“You could learn a thing or two from  
my friendliness.”

*rhea Xie*

His friendliness is expired hair dye. His friendliness is a laugh he cannot hold in.  
His friendliness means nothing, it puts a hand on my chest, pushes the swing over  
the bar, his friendliness watches me fall, watches my knees covered in blood,  
watches me cry, then waits and says come on. His friendliness hears I'm from Taiwan,  
his friendliness keeps saying it is Thailand, his friendliness asks if I love him, his  
friendliness exists to make a spectacle of me. His friendliness is a bedbug,  
a crawling insect, a gadfly. That is what he calls friendliness. So I tell you: get away.  
Your blunt flattery – red headphones, flight to Miami, sawdust mouth, the contempt  
in your eyes, perfume masking body odor, your “go back to your country,” your  
turn away – you repeat “sank you, sank you.” in my ear. Playing along with your  
friendliness does not free me. Free? Free from what? Free from you?