Hummingbird

SALLY, 42, ASIAN
ANN FRANCES, 42, BLACK

APRIL, 2020

The sound of a seagull.

SALLY:
That's weird.

ANN FRANCES:
The wild taking over.

SALLY:
I guess so, yeah.

ANN FRANCES:
There's like dolphins swimming in canals in Italy.
I read that recently.
Or heard it.
I don't read anymore.
My head's very full.

SALLY:
You don't read anymore?

ANN FRANCES:
No, no, I read.
"Summer Street".

SALLY:
That's a street sign.

ANN FRANCES:
"One Federal Square".

SALLY:
That's just a building address.

ANN FRANCES:
My mind is completely consumed.

SALLY:
With Henry home, me home, the boys home, mine is too.

ANN FRANCES:
There's no *span* to my thoughts, you know?

SALLY:
A month more, maybe this will be over.

ANN FRANCES:
Sea gulls overhead is, is so weird.
Even with the water so close.
You forget there's salt water so close.
The wild really could be taking over.
That mural could be real life.
That bird's wings—

SALLY:
When they dive, hummingbirds can flap their wings up to 200 times per second.

ANN FRANCES:
That hummingbird's wings could be real life.
Normally delicate but instead these immense monstrosities,
Towering over us.
Like a fence.

SALLY:
God, it's so quiet.
Barely any cars.
South Station a ghost town.
When I come in to Chinatown to visit my dad I strain my ears.
It doesn't feel like a city.

ANN FRANCES:
He's good?

SALLY:
He's okay.
He's sad.
I'm sad.
I think I can get Henry to agree to let him come stay.
But then Henry's stuck with two sad people missing one incredible person,
Who can never come back.
Or, that *could* be a plan.
When we get to see my dad again.
It's unbelievable he's basically three blocks away

But I can't go see him.

ANN FRANCES:
I've been leaving my parents food on their porch.
Well, Evie does.
That's the bright side of teenagers.

SALLY:
The boys are still so little.

ANN FRANCES:
Oh, just you wait.

SALLY:
Mm.

ANN FRANCES:
I can set them off to do things.

SALLY:
That seems like forever.

ANN FRANCES:
I can set them off to do things.
When they aren't talking back to me.

SALLY:
You're kids are lovely.

ANN FRANCES:
They talk back to me.
They really, really do.
I love them—

SALLY:
Of course you do.

ANN FRANCES:
But sometimes I think maybe I should have left them.
Like at that fire station over there.

SALLY:
Ann Frances.

ANN FRANCES:
It's embarrassing.
The way they talk.

SALLY:
But you wouldn't leave them.

ANN FRANCES:
No. I wouldn't leave them.
And I admit.
Evie does this, when I ask.
She marches all this food I make,
Over to her Nana and Poppy's.

SALLY:
It gets her out.

ANN FRANCES:
I guess.

SALLY:
Fresh air.

ANN FRANCES:
You're right.
Yes.

SALLY:
I mean it's been a month.
Who doesn't feel like there's no end in sight? Cooped up.
It's nice to get out.

ANN FRANCES:
"Palm"

SALLY:
Now you're just reading anything.

ANN FRANCES:
No, talking about food made me hungry.
Seeing that restaurant made me hungry.

SALLY:
The restaurants.
It's crazy.

ANN FRANCES:
Darren was going to take me there once.

SALLY:
We should have done this walk closer to you.

ANN FRANCES:
It's fine.

SALLY:
No, we should have.

ANN FRANCES:
It's fine.

The sound of the two women walking.

ANN FRANCES:
The food I leave isn't very good.

SALLY:
How can you say that?

ANN FRANCES:
I think of the food my mother can make, used to make—

SALLY:
When daughters think of the food that used to be made,
I think little bits of them shrink.

ANN FRANCES:
When I think of the food my mother made,
I get very small.

SALLY:
Should we cross here?

ANN FRANCES:
The wharf will be cold.

SALLY:
We don't have to.

ANN FRANCES:
I only have a sweater.

The sound of the two women walking.

ANN FRANCES:
I think the thing of it is.
The not being able to read thing is—

SALLY:
You can read.

ANN FRANCES:
Is that my mind is very busy *doing*.
I am cleaning, I am washing, I am cooking, I am scrubbing.

SALLY:
I feel it, too.
Henry, the boys, me: cramped.

ANN FRANCES:
The skin on my elbows is looks older.

SALLY:
No.

ANN FRANCES:
The skin on my elbows looks older.
It feels older, too.
It's gotten wrinkled since all this began.
It's darkened up like it belongs to an elephant.
It's dry and smooth and soft at the same time.
I ordered a cream for it. A lotion.
And then I felt guilty about that.

SALLY:
Darren.

ANN FRANCES:
He's doing his best.
And not just Darren.

It's silly.
To think about elbows.
It's vain.
To think about my elbows.
But they are.
Very much older.
In one month's time.

SALLY:
Well we used to spend whole afternoons
Just painting our toes.

ANN FRANCES:
We were twelve.

SALLY:
I remember once we spent maybe hours?
Counting chocolate chips in Chips A-hoy.

ANN FRANCES:
When was the last time either one of us even looked down at our toes?

SALLY laughs.

SALLY:
Hey, I work out.

ANN FRANCES:
No, like looked down at our toes just cause?

Beat.

ANN FRANCES:
We're like these pollinator bees.
Busy, busy.

SALLY:
Busy, busy.

ANN FRANCES:
Look down at your toes.

SALLY:
Oh God.

ANN FRANCE:
Oh, yes.
Yes, do it.
Look down at your toes.

SALLY:
…
…Okay, fine.

Quiet as both women look down at their feet.
Perhaps the sound of a car, but only one, or two.

ANN FRANCES:
Let's walk.

SALLY:
Like this.

ANN FRANCES:
Yes.

SALLY:
Looking down at our toes.

ANN FRANCES:
Yes.

The sound of the two women walking.

SALLY:
I feel give years old.

ANN FRANCES:
Me too, I think.

The sound of the two women walking,

SALLY:
If we put our arms out, we might look like we've escaped from the Aquarium over there.

ANN FRANCES:
Put your arms out.

SALLY laughs.

SALLY:
I'm not putting my arms out.

ANN FRANCES:
Let's both put our arms out.

SALLY:
I am not putting my arms out in the middle of this Greenway.

ANN FRANCES:
Who cares?

SALLY:
Walk like a penguin in the middle of the street?

ANN FRANCES:
It's not the middle of the street.
It's the middle of a *Greenway*.
And there is like *no one* even looking at us.

SALLY:
Ann Frances.

ANN FRANCES:
Sally.

SALLY:
I feel silly.

ANN FRANCES:
My elbows got *old.*

SALLY:
Ann Frances.

ANN FRANCES:
My elbows got *old*.
I am scrunched between Evie and my mother and my father and this man I married
Who I don't think I know anymore.
I feel six hundred years old maybe overnight.
Maybe over more than that.
But it doesn't feel right.
Thirty-three chocolate chips in a Chips A-hoy feels right.

Two coats of cherry-red polish on our toes while we watch horror movies feels right.
Please.
Do this with me?

Beat.

Beat.

The sound of seagulls.

ANN FRANCES:
Please?

The sound of walking.

The sound of walking.

SALLY laughs.

ANN FRANCES laughs.

The walking speeds up.

Both women continue to laugh.

Walk, walk—

ANN FRANCES:
Sally, look up.

Stop.

SALLY:
Oh.

ANN FRANCES:
The carousel.

SALLY:
The carousel.
I didn't realize we'd walked this far.

ANN FRANCES:
It's beautiful.

Beat.

Beat.

ANN FRANCES:
Race ya?
The rule is, you can't look up.

SALLY:
And arms stay out.

The sound of both women first walking, then picking up pace.

ANN FRANCES:
My head.
My head.
I could read a book.
I could jump a fence.

The music of a Carousel, faint.

SALLY and ANN FRANCES' laughter, faint.

End.