

 TRANSNATIONAL LITERATURE 

Rainbow

Cai Hong and Mei Li
are now Ashley and Amy Hart.*
Black hair, brown eyes, and yellow skin,
from orphanage or foster parents in China to the Buckeye State,
in a home that is not originally ours,
with loving parents different from us –
in looks, but close in heart.

Mommy has two storage bags:
maps of China, baby clothing, feeding bottles, and silk scarves
found with us lying on a winter street in China, crying.
Lili, our Chinese teacher, had tears in her eyes
when Mommy showed her the bags.
We found these tears incomprehensible,
and thought Lili was just too silly, like a cry-baby.

Concerts, YMCA Indian Princesses, backyard swings,
Trick or Treat, and trips to farms;
cheese sticks, lasagne, cereal, pizzas, steamed vegetables,
and cheddar cheese crackers.
We take all these for granted,
but also try Chinese *chao fan*, *jiaozi*, *baozi*, and *zong zi* –
exquisite cuisine flirting with our palate a while ago.

Dong Isbister

* Cai Hong and Mei Li are Chinese words meaning Rainbow and Beautiful in English.