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2 poems

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2 POEMS

Tiffany Hsieh

Head Scratch

I have a big head, bigger than most hats. I know the difference between a whitehead and a blackhead. Back home we eat Lion's Head, meatballs so big they are ferocious. I keep my head tilted back while a head slides between my legs. I pet the head, it's misty like a shower head. A whiff of Head & Shoulders. Nowadays the head reads like the subhead and the head chef goes home with the head of state. I give a man head while bowing my head because that's what heads like mine do. Heads that were taxed. Heads with black hair. Heads too stubborn to kowtow except in extended child's pose. Heads-up, I'm coming. If you scratch my head, I'll scratch yours.

Scarred

This here on my chin is from when I accidentally branded myself with incense trying to steal candy during bai-bai. Ah-ma had said her prayers to Ah-gong and the gods, and I reached for the candy without seeing the burning stick staked there while the dead ate. Down here, on my right foot, that's from a scooter's exhaust pipe. It was a family outing to the rice paddies and I was wearing slippers. Up here, on the left, I was hit by a swing and the doctor gave me nine stitches and a big white bandage around the head. For a while they thought I was going to be less bright. And here, my two front teeth, they are fake. I was playing Shark Attack on a marble slide with my brother. He was the shark. His wife didn't come home with him last Christmas and I asked about it at dinner. It's none of your business, he

snapped. No hesitation, no eye contact.

TIFFANY HSIEH was born in Taiwan and moved to Canada at the age of fourteen. Her fiction and poetry have appeared or are forthcoming in *Juked*, *The Malahat Review*, *Passages North*, *Poet Lore*, *Room*, *Salamander*, *The Shanghai Literary Review*, *Sonora Review*, and others. Her work has been nominated for Best Microfiction and Best Small Fictions. She lives in southern Ontario.