

The good day

by [Karen An-Hwei Lee](#) in the [July 28, 2021](#) issue

After the bad day, I pray for good days  
in the world. On good days, women  
are safe, brushing out their hair  
while waiting for God to say hello.

The world is an unwalled garden  
of fruit we enjoy without worrying  
about fork-tongued, talking serpents  
lying. We taste and see life is good.

On good days, we walk on the paths  
to the rivers. We are never catcalled  
or spat upon, never ordered to leave  
while gazing at stars or figs, pears,

satsuma oranges or mangosteens,  
never questioned about our origins.  
We are never eclipsed by our fears  
of violence personified in the night.

We are fully human and fully iron  
at the same time. This is God's blood,  
goodness poured out like first aid  
for a blighted, burning world. Days

are so good, they taste like lychees.  
Family names and faces are loved.  
We drink goodness and swim in it,  
bathe in it, born in the good days.

Our churches are churches, the brides  
of Christ, not sites of carnage.  
During the good days, I peel and eat

a ripe pomegranate in the garden

without hesitation, free of the grip  
of underground assassins taking us  
from our mothers, trapping us  
in cavernous, endless winters—

without pondering if this seed  
I swallow is my last if a bullet  
will meet my flesh and bone  
as I walk out the front door.