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POEM IN ENGLISH

SOUVANKHAM THAMMAVONGSA

GAYATRI

I have a picture of us when we are seven  
but we aren't in it. At the time it was taken  
we thought we were. We posed with our wide  
grins and best-friends-forever certainty. I angled  
the camera to capture us in front of a Christmas tree.  
All the sparkling tinsel and dangling silver balls aren't there.  
There is only the ceiling and the tip  
of the pine needle. There isn't a star or an angel  
on top. I have kept this picture of us for years,  
the only one to remember and laugh at what happened  
to us then. It was taken before a time when you could  
see a picture on a screen, see how it turned out  
and decide whether it was worth keeping. I think of you  
now and again, the plain peanut butter sandwiches we ate  
with apples. You said you were going to be a dentist  
when you grew up, and with a fork and a spoon  
you determined it was possible I would live  
and sent me home with a bag full of Twizzlers and hair bands.