

After the Dinner Party

By Adrienne Su

Dropping napkins, corks, and non-compostables
into the trash, I see that friends have mistaken
my everyday chopsticks for disposables,

helpfully discarding them alongside inedibles:
pork bones, shrimp shells, bitter melon.
Among napkins and corks, they do look compostable:

off-white, wooden, warped from continual
washing — no lacquer, no ornament. But anyone
who thinks these chopsticks are disposable

doesn't live with chopsticks in the comfortable
way of a favorite robe, oversized, a bit broken.
Thin paper napkins, plastic forks, and non-compostable

takeout boxes constitute the chopstick's natural
habitat to many I hold dear. With family or alone,
I'll maintain that chopsticks aren't disposable,

but if I can make peace with the loss of utensils
when breaking *bao* with guests, I'll be one of them,
not digging in the napkins and corks. Compostable
chopsticks are the answer: everyday *and* disposable.