

sueyeun juliette lee

trespass slightly in

8. *The final sound*

forward and falling in half, burnt at both ends,
I am my native birthright and the holiest of texts.
the center can transfix the stillness of a storm.
missions failed, fought, finalized and won
stand to the side disfigured by the realization of a space
between the names.
that the answer can be an unspoken sound, delivered
by mute secrets dug out and quickly buried,
that to have no inscription in the book of generations
is a testament to the rightness of an empty word.
there are ages to discover
deliverance in continuous motion,
the depth charted in a sound, decaying.
that the instant is a present for the round mouth of expectation,
providing no proof but the names I wear,
a silk shift,
a shroud.

trespass slightly in

Apogee

6. *origins, or the photograph*

the face is not mine
neither hers nor his

the baby is not me
eyes more wild and black

is it to marry a woman from the north
to find a man tall, landed

ambition or obedience
I only recognize the early bud of these faces

intent on upholding and yet
breaking all custom

learn and unlearn even in old age
accepting new marriages

clothing, food, societies,
work, children, languages and disease

what coincidences and necessities
can force those who struggle ashore

to build, cut free but pouring

The things possible to have said, uncurled in a swallowed sound

I am of you and different.
My name follows the shadow of yours
catches shade in a valley of bees
We are meant to move forward without assistance

but lacking little light we turned and fled

4. *traveling the distance*

remarkable for my “vigor” my “height” my lack of cosmetics
what was fashionable is comic, I parade in the rainy seasons
burnt out with disuse, with layering having been found and returned
the city is a disaster in concrete, are you Chinese, must I speak—

this is my cousin, she is studying during her visit

distance is relative, hinged

joints bend where other spaces would break
forced into a posture, object

stars move slowly across the sky’s face

this is now something recognized on a screen

2. *the first name*

emptiness of the unsaid vowel, space, holder, open mouth, float

I understand the quiet mouth the roundest of its shapes
I do not go by this given name

the soft heart of which
salty like a palm

louder than the eyes having it
louder than the deer giving up its secrets on the tree

quietly we crawl under our covers, three in a bed
the house stands still after hours of unrest
delicate as folding screens these turns burn our faces shut

we hear and see but do not speak

broad light of day is hard release
dark ambient mover
destiny holds swirling gates ajar, squeaks

Poisonous

The mouth is to feed, is to put things into

Things that fall out: teeth
 seeds
 crab shells
 curses

Embarrassed by strangers the tongue is confusing

Things become boring

Glossed over with new olive oil or peaches

There is no recognition in this

My freckled spirit

A single line drawing, tacked up against the skin

this new injury without cause.

A face covers, presents itself always outwards.

How to suffer secretly without animating, without escape.

Confusion conquers survival

Yes, we are fed

Yes, we may read

The paper is biblically thin

I am asked to turn down the light

She hangs sweaters over the lamps

This is a beautiful country

Understand you cannot go back

The titles are signed over, are signed

New buildings go up and down

are rented and sold

Logic is starker than the responses

I do not respond when your hand burns

The page is blank before it burns

These are the few spaces I have allocated to you

I do not recognize the living room

Some simple pleasures resolve into terrible consequences. A knife held against taut, gold skin. To sink teeth into, taste summer's sweet southern face. Wander haphazardly without a trail, relying on vague leavings to guide the way. A waterfall that cast no shade. A bridge where you fight a titan in miniature in order to cross. Go abroad, nude. Being watchful is for those aware.

There is no end to seeping: its purpose is to hold at bay. Let out the aimless wander, a darkness from behind the veil. If I cut myself, unstopper, unstaunch, taste a dialect from inside the coursing will—who is to say completion is a category forced from an end. There are significant aftershocks hidden and replete in their scarlet robes. The force of the world can unite the contaminant, so I hope, sucking bee pollen against the teeth.

This injury repeating, there is no sense in pain. No admonishment for a character burned into skin. I terrified and lost. In losing now I stain. The outcomes are consistent: to sing a sweet song or drowned. The boat skimmed along until the shore. An obvious design of the ripples, what slipped beneath the tongue.

For my family.

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Some of these poems have previously appeared in *XConnect* and *Coconut*.



Sueyeun Juliette Lee grew up in McLean, Virginia just three miles from the headquarters for the CIA. Recent work of hers has appeared in *Columbia Poetry Review*, *580 Split*, *Coconut*, and *Phoebe*. She currently edits Corollary Press, which she launched in 2005.

7. *missive*

dear future pear,

space can be a float, a raft before the quake. you may discover that sound shivers before the story, before the waking eye inside your head. stay true to the wandering thought and lose yourself in the mad varieties of the world. the ear can be tuned, trained to follow the end to a full delivery. arrive in the greatest potential of each motion to find that what was discovered bids rectifying though lost. piecing together from the notes splayed in your head may transform the utter tune, losing both the pitch and timbre of the voice you carried home. silence may disfigure or set the lamps on fire. seeing can be a heard thing, just as tasting can be a name.

you have worn many names and faces, sir

to say you are undisciplined is a love of lies
your expectation wavers with the sky turning
what they all worked hard for stops

dark mountains, coughing
a sharp night's silence

no longer a child
orphan, stoic, doctor, sir

firstborn
first abroad
first lost

as a child, I spoke as a child

abba
aboji

5. *the second name*

(that I have loved you and failed is an extension of the past)

*my father is a generous man and well versed
we make things with our hands and eat
my mother is a wise woman and shrewd
she dresses in violet and adorns her hair*

romance or parody
heroine and failure, the right decision may mean desist

a thing of beauty
common and fleeting

what was given to one age nearly repeated so others may also taste

I am to say
who was but until the present never could be

he is a good man

I see and hear everything.
I see and hear you.

Speak as simply as you can
without fire these words nearly sleep
the distance between

a shade platform
a scheduled announcement
faces fanning in the heat

3. *between me and you*

having forgotten what was mine
forgotten in the way of my never having
what is to say in the space not had
never gotten
which is to say

my two ways have forgotten me

swallowed in the thousand flight
day walkers, collectors, miracle sound engine a storm

lacking necessary endings
mystery transforms night into illusion
familiar object outland delivers

sight objects unearthing sound

na
nabi
nun
white
what
lies

lost as a child

sighted in the scrim and flash

sway

Having no name but these two

1. breaking out

I wanted what they all thought
face bright morning blind
against a wall of antique glass

I knew that sound in seeing

song's daughter, mending with the hands
we are of each other

though separated I cannot stand

blushing for words, for eyes, for having been slightly cast
down and to the side, blushing, a toxic resin, seeping,
blushing for lack of cover, of outerwear, against heat, in frost, blushing
with wine, with firelight, shame, blushing against abrasiveness,
a breeze's aggressive handling, from forced contact, a misstep
or slice of fruit

In truth, by not speaking we are buried
In truth, we speak huddled and on the phone
What pieces fall together do not match
What relates does not fit together

There are no documents or photographs

Negations

To love and then to strike, to lust and then to sate. There isn't any end to what one smallness does. Show me a place and then another, building a small castle out of mud and straw. A place held for centuries, nearly flooded, but held. We were so nearly made of day. A poultice transmits what was necessary to contract.

I carry you throughout myself, most deadly messenger.
The words you scrawl rearrange themselves each night

re-sear inside the ear's canals

And when we had been scattered over the face of the earth
We could not speak to one another

Myung-Mi Kim

As white as a ghost, barely as simple
There are no responses
fluttering

There are no solutions bound in the body we discuss
the glass cut over your wrist
reminds you of something you wanted and never had

Am I my mother's child and wholly hers
This face is not for you or them
We are never mistaken
I am frequently mistaken

There are no punishments for my face for having seen
I carry no splinters in my tongue

in my tremor
perfect lost against a growing swell

shelf made of sand

the eye grieves its own wandering,
taking trespass slightly in

Oh swords beneath the weather caught up in trellises or rain
How is it to take shape in a swarm breathing heat
Carving relegated into losing the crisp lines between sand grains, glass

Whether of the ear, nose, a similarity in the sense of sight and touch. From softness only a memory may bleed. What was done with bidding cost so little and these words now are bare. Maybe to catch their seams against me, to take them up through a tear. There are distances and dystrophies. Transforming hyperbole into mute shale, keep watch with how the wind takes hold and crashes.