

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Yoon Park: Three Poems

Yoon Park · Monday, June 3rd, 2024

### we are all just stars that have people names

I'd steal the stars to hang them in your room.  
 I'd pluck Orion's arrow out of the sky  
 And paint you across miles of constellations.  
 You'd say mind the tip and I'd dull my edges for you.  
 You'd ask draw me the sky and I'd map your face  
 Because your upper lip is Aries' golden fleece  
 And your freckles are Neptune's 14 moons.  
 If nobody wrote stories about your stars I'd make them  
 Beautiful over Andromeda's name. You'd say *you make me*  
*Sound like I was a hero; I'd say but you were mine—*  
 I'd weave your constellation onto strings  
 Made from the taste of peaches tenderly plucked  
 From moonlight lips only  
 If you'd let me.

They say the dead shine brightest  
 When they are remembered;  
 How I'd hang the stars for people to remember  
 Your name.

\*

### Whomever

Dear whomever it may concern  
 I left my wedding ring and pinkie finger length of my dignity  
 and my Hawaiian-shirt penguin bobble head with my sense of direction  
 along with three lottery tickets and a list of my previous and future failures  
 in the plane seat I threw myself out of without regard:  
 I just wanted you to know. Only  
 okay, it's not just that I wanted you to know  
 I just wanted you to find them for me but it's just an offer after all

no really, you don't have to but it would be nice  
 if you did. You know what's funny  
 whomever it may concern is that if I  
 got a nickel for every time that I decided to just jump a way  
 out of my own problems I'd have two nickels  
 which you know, isn't much but it would be weird  
 that it happened twice. Only the first time  
 wasn't me leaving all my stuff behind in the cupholder  
 like how I leave my car keys and an ounce of a small abrasion over  
 what would no doubt develop into an impressive but inconsequential  
 knot anyways. That first time I left all my scars and chances in a bucket  
 and drowned it in a river in Williamsburg County where everyone could see  
 but that's not important, because it's always the second attempts that last longer  
 in history books or the newsletter and what everyone wants  
 is to be remembered for the grander  
 even stupider things  
 whomever it may concern

\*

## He

Nobody taught him how to build machines out of paper mache and skylight  
 and how to kill with chess board pieces and craft with soap bubbles  
 yet everyone watched through a memory  
 that wasn't theirs as he built a ship.  
 He used to tell people that they weren't only geniuses  
 on earth; knees folded around base, chisel and a hammer that told him  
 he was in control—only, he could not be because he only sculpted  
 when he was too desperate to say that he was, cheap spirits  
 sunbathing him in pearly whites and an unhealthy habit  
 and a fake smile that lined up with a foot, switching tools  
 with an efficiency that he only borrowed from a dead friend  
 his hips dragging the floor and painting it red and blue  
 fitting into the colors like wearing thrifted clothes  
 there was someone here before him. He'd been here  
 hundreds of times, he knew how this went: she wanted a blue room  
 he said yes. Alright. Won't forget. She wanted a bed as big as this  
 he said deal. She wanted a skylight exactly like this one  
 he said exactly like this one; it was his way of apologizing.  
 Nobody taught him that he couldn't build ships for ghosts  
 how silly. Because soap bubbles were supposed to be pretty, fragile things  
 not the proof that he just lost the universe; maybe  
 he ought to start sleeping in the garden instead of a bed  
 with the dogs and the drunken dancers. And maybe that's why  
 she asked for a skylight. But he couldn't know for sure  
 he played a song on his glass with his ring  
 that even he didn't recognize. He didn't ask

she didn't say it and they both left it unspoken because  
it was prettier that way. Maybe in this dream he ignored her and moved on  
the Expectation stared at him from across town with ghost eyes  
and left him in an unexcused contradiction  
that he would now represent.

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