

My Mother's Testament

my mother is
 stooped at my
 doorstep and
my girlhood
 aches again
 will I
die from my
 mother's suicide
 do you hear
her crying hear
 her dying see
 her bowing
at my feet like a
 forsaken child who's
 felt god in
their living room see
 her begging me
 to spare
her from
 a teenage girl from
 a generation
forced by
 immigration by
 guns by
bombs
 masculine volition I
 am my own
oppression
 and suddenly
 only my

matriarch
 stood before
 me and
my mother and
 how I laughed
 when I saw
her
 hands clasped
 eyes shut
knees caved
 into a joined demise
 what is a
daughter if not
 the most broken parts
 of yourself
when I close my
 eyes the world
 quiets and
all I hear are
 her dying
 whispers
tha tôi
 tha tôi
 like I am a god
đau quá
 con ơi con
 like I am a god
làm ơn
 cứu tôi
 like I am a god

Why would anyone want to be a god?

Reminiscing With My Mother

The time I broke my ankle tripping over my own foot and how I laughed when
You asked how someone could break their ankle walking and how I laughed when
You forced me to bring my crutches to school and how I laughed when
It rained and how I laughed when
My crutches slipped and how I laughed when
Pity flickered across the eyes of middle schoolers staring down at me and how I laughed when
I told you I never want to use my crutches again and how I laughed when
My anger became nameless pleas and how I laughed when
You said you only wanted the best for me and how I laughed when
I screamed at you and how I laughed when
You screamed back and how I laughed when
Neither of us understood the madness prowling inside of me and how I laughed when
Our screams turned into an ancient folk song and how I laughed when
Ba held me like I was still his little girl and how I laughed when
He didn't tell me everything was going to be ok and how I laughed when
You cupped my entire chest in the palms of your hands and how I laughed when
You threw it at me and how I laughed when
You told me to get out of your house and how I laughed when
Ba told me to apologize and how I laughed when
I saw my future laced in pain behind your bulging eyes and how I laughed when
You cried for the little girl whose own girlhood killed her and how I laughed when
You thought my own girlhood killed you too and how I laugh when
I remember the time I broke my ankle tripping over my own foot

An Immigrant Kind Of Love

Funny how my grandfather was born in China and my mother was born in Vietnam and the
American in me still wonders why I don't belong anywhere

When AURORA said *Take me home where I belong*
I can't take it anymore and how I wanted to die a little more

If all men knew how to properly love a woman, would I still be born?

My mother saying *I'm okay* and me saying *okay* for the 16th year as I watch the tears
wring out of her bleeding eyes

In her hands, I am the most precious thing in the world

Mẹ ơi mẹ đừng bỏ con as she leaves for the grocery store

To hold my father's hands and tell him my mother doesn't hate him

My mother loves me on her own time

Where does the war end and my mother begin?

Was our loneliness inevitable?

My mother staring at a scale and
me wishing my father knew how to properly love her

Mẹ có biết con là ai không

Me in a black dress like a body dressed for a funeral

Who would I be if my mother dies? and for the rest of the night
I lay on the kitchen floor and cry