

# Eating Together

By Li-Young Lee

In the steamer is the trout  
seasoned with slivers of ginger,  
two sprigs of green onion, and sesame oil.  
We shall eat it with rice for lunch,  
brothers, sister, my mother who will  
taste the sweetest meat of the head,  
holding it between her fingers  
deftly, the way my father did  
weeks ago. Then he lay down  
to sleep like a snow-covered road  
winding through pines older than him,  
without any travelers, and lonely for no one.

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The son of a personal physician of Mao Zedong, Li-Young Lee was born in Jakarta, Indonesia, to Chinese parents. After fleeing the country, the family settled in the United States in 1964. Li-Young Lee's mother came from a noble family, with her grandfather serving as the first president of the Republic of China. Upon arriving in the U.S., Lee's father became a Presbyterian minister in Pennsylvania. Lee's poetry is filled with vivid imagery and creates an atmosphere of silence, much like the poems of China's classical poets. His work often fades from reality into dream worlds, and is punctuated with an attention to the senses.