

Learning to love America

By Shirley Geok-Lin Lim

because it has no pure products

because the Pacific Ocean sweeps along the coastline

because the water of the ocean is cold

and because land is better than ocean

because I say we rather than they

because I live in California

I have eaten fresh artichokes

and jacaranda bloom in April and May

because my senses have caught up with my body

my breath with the air it swallows

my hunger with my mouth

because I walk barefoot in my house

because I have nursed my son at my breast

because he is a strong American boy

because I have seen his eyes redden when he is asked who he is

because he answers I don't know

because to have a son is to have a country

because my son will bury me here

because countries are in our blood and we bleed them

because it is late and too late to change my mind

because it is time.

Shirley Geok-lin Lim, "Learning to love America" from *What the Fortune Teller Didn't Say*.

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