

Summer Vacation (preface)

Josi Mata

Who will eat our blood
on their tables tonight

This meager wage
that feels as hard
as the hoe in your hand

Summer Vacation

I have walked with
drank with
the man
of hell
the devil
pouring
our hot, painful
into the
nightmares we will feed off
of again

I have blurred my vision for him
over hands that
slammed his
childhood into me

Many times i have worked
next to
his darkness
smelling of weeds and sweat

holding off his rage
in hot afternoon

hiding his beer

burying the bullets
he thinks he has hidden from us

I have seen his eyes follow the sun
fiercely holding his head in
his hands
he has thrown bombs
at us
rocks
hoes
food
tablas
dishes
belts
shoes
insults

that day I washed his
t-shirt full of
my mother's blood

his mouth nervous like
a dog
still quivering from
his anger
from that place
deep

inside
the rib cage
which may have
spread like wings
if he were in another time

his emptiness filled with

real hunger unerasable
we are within reach for his
quenching

I have worked
next to, given water
to the *diablo*
spat
in his food, picked
ripened tomatoes
seen salt
caked on
his clothing
from hard work

he whistles
un corrido
he carries a tune
as any *mariachi, el diablo*

he will call my sister *puta* tonight
he will call me ugly
and try to kill my innocent mother

he will pine sugar
and drink
to his hearts content
me and my brother will bury his bullets
again

The Line

Josi Mata

I'd take your
hard
knives
and rough hands

your name is not Yin Lee woman

sit on this here bench
and
look at you
through
warm breath
steaming on a cold day

I'd grind coffee beans

chop garlic, stand all day
not Yin Lee

These men, younger than you,
do not
deserve
your smile

You do not deserve your
nervous laugh,
your
hurry up
and serve

anxiety

I, for this
want to take