

# From Yang to Yen

*Feifei Kaglic*

cramped elementary classroom  
fingers of sunlight caressing  
one half of the globe seated  
atop a dusty windowsill  
black board and white chalk  
scarfs red like peonies and dark  
like the blood our parents shed  
alongside their sweat and tears  
as they devote their lives to  
ledgers, stethoscopes, contracts  
so we could one day drink nectar  
and grin at a sky untainted by smog

our youth trapped us in dreamland  
where watercolor paintings depicted  
a melting pot of milk and honey,  
an abundance of laurel wreaths,  
a chance to witness walls not made of fire,  
a legend known to us as the American Dream

so we surrendered our unbroken lines,  
rode the azure dragon of Yang to a land  
where dragons kidnapped maidens and  
embodied sins and infernal nightmares  
where the alabaster pointed fingers at the amber  
mouths firing missiles chinking our armors  
where ledgers, stethoscopes, contracts yield  
to toilets, taxis, trays of steaks ready to be served  
thick accents eliciting laughter and mockery  
barbie dolls wrinkling their noses at china dolls  
even our own turn on us in a futile attempt  
to feast on morsels and swallow the melancholy

now we are caught in between dreams and nightmares  
sucking the Yin tiger's milk as our memories wane  
until we no longer recognize the characters on  
dwindling red envelopes or hear the songs of our ancestors  
the road leading to our childhood home has vanished  
even so, we will never receive the same love as a blank canvas