

DiverCity

Poetry Collection

Edited by Neda Aria

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A poetry collection collected for June 9, Empathy day. A day we almost never celebrate. This collection is on the topics of peace, love and empathy written by 23 poets and writers from all around the world. The title of this book is adapted from the poem written by Vitor Vincent.





DEDICATION

To the disturbed, the minority, the
poor, the depressed, to mothers, the
suppressed, the imprisoned, to the
victims of capitalist greed, to us

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The Last War Poem

By Bryan Thao Worra



I tell you, this is the last word for this war.

This little side war we were the center of.

There is no justice from poetry

Any veteran can tell you that.

They want their land, their lives

Their livestock back.

Grenade fishing in the aftermath of Phou Pha Thi

Has lost its novelty

To the man with a bullet fragment rattling
In his body, slowly tearing him apart.
Write, they tell me. Write what?
We lost, we were forgotten, we are ghosts.
We are victims of fat tigers and foreign policy.
There is no Valhalla, only memories of Spectre gunships
There is no Elysium, only pleas for asylum.
This jungle was filthy.
There was shit. There was blood.
There were refugees
Who to this day cannot explain why they were the enemy
When the war came.
Their sons fought. Their brothers died.
Their uncles, maimed, were hauled screaming
Into the shadows of the Plain of Jars.
Write, they tell me, so people won't forget.
So someone will know.
Lift the broken bodies with my words, bring them out
And say 'we did not die in vain'.

For every bullet hole, let there be a word to stand as a monument.

For every lost limb let there be a sonnet to stitch the truth back together.

For every eye gone blind, let there be something to take its place.

Something. Anything.

How can you not have words for the war of whispers?

How can you not shout, now that the whispering is done?

And I swear, each time I break this promise, that the next time

Will be the last word I write about this damn war.



E Pluribus Unim

By Bryan Thao Worra

Youa tells me a story over the hot hibachi:

How she went to Laos

To see her lucky sisters

For the first time in two decades,

Since the country has loosened up enough

To let tourists like us in.

“Isn’t it beautiful?” she asks me,

Then says she gave her sister Mayli \$50

To help her family.

When Youa returned to the Twin Cities,

She learned her sister had been murdered

For the money

By Mayli's ex-husband, who'd heard
Of their family reunion
And thought the cash rightfully belonged to him.

“Did you give your relatives anything?”

She asks.

“Yes,” I reply. “\$500. But they say they need more
To get to America.”



Leuk Lao

By Bryan Thao Worra

 We meet on the road

But once and I cannot tell you

In the time we have:

"We are one."

"What's left, what survived, what remains

Of old dreams, old wars, old loves."

We share atomic lives:

Small, brief, unpredictable orbits,

Curious flurries of motion and smiles.

Who you become after I go,

I can only guess

Except by the photos

Of occasional touring strangers

In which I watch you grow,

While you remember an eye,

A camera, a wave goodbye.



Sic Transit Gloria

By Morgan A. Pryce



You kicked in my heart

left me for dead

a blow up doll

gave me more love than

you ever wanted

or could

by the time you were

done with me i no longer

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