

Poetry from Eileen R. Tabios

written by Guest Contributor | December 11, 2014



[1]

I forgot you were the altar that made me stay... I forgot the spine bent willingly for a stranger's whip... I forgot how an erasure captures the threshold of consciousness... I forgot even a boor can pause before a Rembrandt portrait... I forgot one can use color to prevent encounters from degenerating into lies... I forgot learning to appreciate rust, and how it taught me bats operate through radar... I forgot the bald girl whose neck increasingly thinned until I could count the ropes stretched along her throat... I forgot the bliss deep within an ascetic's eyes as he wandered with a beggar's bowl... I forgot your betrayal that forever marks me like a heart's tattoo blossoming painfully against an inner thigh... I forgot how detachment includes. I forgot how detachment enabled a white rattlesnake to penetrate my dreams... I forgot the protection of his diamonds.

[2]

I forgot you were the altar that made me stay... I forgot how an erasure captures the threshold of consciousness... I forgot the plainest of bread can clear an oenophile's palate... I forgot the bald girl whose neck increasingly thinned until I could count the ropes stretched along her throat... I forgot the bliss deep within an ascetic's eyes as he wandered with a beggar's bowl... I forgot death without forgetting my mortality... I forgot how detachment includes. I forgot how detachment enabled a white rattlesnake to penetrate my dreams... I forgot chafing at eating food earned by someone else, each swallow bequeathing an *ineffable* with the demeanor of ice... I forgot your favorite color was water.

[3]

I forgot the night was unanimous... I forgot how one begins marking time from a lover's utterance of *Farewell*... I forgot even a boor can pause before a Rembrandt portrait... I forgot Mom beginning to age when she started looking at the world through heartbreaking resignation... I forgot I was not an immigrant; I was simply myself who lacked control at how the world formed outside the "Other" of me... I forgot death without forgetting my mortality... I forgot how detachment includes. I forgot how detachment enabled a white rattlesnake to penetrate my dreams... I forgot the protection of his diamonds... I forgot chafing at eating food earned by someone else, each

swallow bequeathing an *ineffable* with the demeanor of ice.

[4]

I forgot Mom beginning to age when she started looking at the world through heartbreaking resignation.... I forgot I was not an immigrant; I was simply myself who lacked control at how the world formed outside the "Other" of me.... I forgot the bald girl whose neck increasingly thinned until I could count the ropes stretched along her throat.... I forgot admiring women who refuse to paint their lips.... I forgot dust motes trapped in a tango after the sun lashed out a ray.... I forgot the bliss deep within an ascetic's eyes as he wandered with a beggar's bowl.... I forgot your betrayal that forever marks me like a heart's tattoo blossoming painfully against an inner thigh.... I forgot the protection of his diamonds.... I forgot chafing at eating food earned by someone else, each swallow bequeathing an *ineffable* with the demeanor of ice.

[5]

I forgot you were the altar that made me stay.... I forgot the spine bent willingly for a stranger's whip.... I forgot the night was unanimous.... I forgot how an erasure captures the threshold of consciousness.... I forgot jasmine insisted it was the scent of gold.... I forgot even a boor can pause before a Rembrandt portrait.... I forgot one can use color to prevent encounters from degenerating into lies.... I forgot dancing furious flamenco with vultures under a menopausal sun.... I forgot learning to appreciate rust, and how it taught me bats operate through radar.... I forgot the bald girl whose neck increasingly thinned until I could count the ropes stretched along her throat.

[6]

I forgot clutching the wet mane of a panicked horse.... I forgot the night was unanimous.... I forgot how an erasure captures the threshold of consciousness.... I forgot how one begins marking time from a lover's utterance of *Farewell*.... I forgot Mom beginning to age when she started looking at the world through heartbreaking resignation.... I forgot dancing furious flamenco with vultures under a menopausal sun.... I forgot learning to appreciate rust, and how it taught me bats operate through radar.... I forgot the plainest of bread can clear an oenophile's palate.... I forgot dust motes trapped in a tango after the sun lashed out a ray.... I forgot the bliss deep within an ascetic's eyes as he wandered with a beggar's bowl.... I forgot how detachment includes. I

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[7]

I forgot the spine bent willingly for a stranger's whip... I forgot the night was unanimous... I forgot how one begins marking time from a lover's utterance of *Farewell*... I forgot jasmine insisted it was the scent of gold... forgot one can use color to prevent encounters from degenerating into lies... I forgot learning to appreciate rust, and how it taught me bats operate through radar... I forgot dust motes trapped in a tango after the sun lashed out a ray... I forgot death without forgetting my mortality... I forgot how detachment includes. I forgot how detachment enabled a white rattlesnake to penetrate my dreams... I forgot the colors of a scream: the regret of crimson, the futility of pink, the astonishment of brown.

[8]

I forgot the spine bent willingly for a stranger's whip... I forgot Mom beginning to age when she started looking at the world through heartbreaking resignation... I forgot one can use color to prevent encounters from degenerating into lies... I forgot dancing furious flamenco with vultures under a menopausal sun... I forgot the plainest of bread can clear an oenophile's palate... I forgot the bald girl whose neck increasingly thinned until I could count the ropes stretched along her throat... I forgot your betrayal that forever marks me like a heart's tattoo blossoming painfully against an inner thigh... I forgot how detachment includes. I forgot how detachment enabled a white rattlesnake to penetrate my dreams.

✘ Eileen R. Tabios loves books, and has released more than 20 print, three electronic and 1 CD poetry collections; an art essay collection; a "collected novels" book; a poetry essay/interview anthology; a short story collection;

and an experimental biography. Her most recent release is *SUN STIGMATA* (Sculpture Poems) (Marsh Hawk Press, 2014). She has also exhibited visual art and visual poetry in the United States and Asia. Recipient of the Philippines' National Book Award for Poetry for her first poetry collection, she has crafted an award-winning body of work that is unique for melding ekphrasis with transcolonialism. Her poems have been translated into Spanish, Italian, Tagalog, Japanese, Portuguese, Polish, Greek, computer-generated hybrid languages, Paintings, Video, Drawings, Visual Poetry, Mixed Media Collages, Kali Martial Arts, Music, Modern Dance and Sculpture. She also has edited, co-edited or conceptualized ten anthologies of poetry, fiction and essays in addition to serving as editor or guest editor for various literary journals. She maintains a bibliophilic blog, "Eileen Verbs Books"; edits *Galatea Resurrects*, a popular poetry review; steers the literary and arts publisher Meritage Press; and frequently curates thematic online poetry projects including *LinkedIn Poetry Recommendations* (a recommended list of contemporary poetry books).