

LARISSA LAI / from **Flower Factory Riot**

Bolo!

Bolo! Bolo! Bolo! Pineapples are exploding! Pineapples to the left! Pineapples to the right! Bang! Bang! Bang! At the Hong Kong Artificial Flower Works the flower makers are rising up! Blood for Blood! Imperialism and Reactionaries are All Paper Tigers! Dare to Struggle and Dare to Win! Do Not Take a Single Needle or Thread from the Masses! Turn In Everything Captured! Fight No Battle You are Not Sure of Winning! In Order to Get Rid of the Gun, it is Necessary to Take up the Gun! Politics is War Without Bloodshed, War is Politics with Bloodshed! Modesty Makes One Go Forward, Conceit Makes One Lag Behind! People of the World, Unite and Defeat the US Aggressors and All Running Dogs! Monsters of all Kinds Shall be Destroyed! Every Mouth Comes With Two Hands! A Loud Fart is Better than a Long Lecture! Bolo! Bolo! Bolo! Bang! Bang! Bang!

Flower Factory Girl: I shake my Little Red Book at the sky. At last, a voice, a self. My callused fingers soften.

*The Ghost of Lam Bun prepares another talk for the ghost radio show "Can't Stop Striking."
The Ghost of Yeung Kwong prepares another bomb.*

Portugal Cove Road

In 1500, Gaspar Corte Real landed in Portugal Cove to bury two of his sailors who had died en route from Lisbon. When the French raided Conception Bay in 1696, they found three families of English/Irish descent living in Portugal Cove. Portugal Cove Road was the first major road connecting the cove to town. The fishermen used it to carry their fish to St. John's to sell. In 1973, my father and mother bought a house at the corner of Portugal Cove Road and Malka Drive. My mother went down to the

wharf at Middle Cove to buy cod from the fishing boats and crab from the crabbing boats. Sometimes, the fishermen would give her a flatfish, caught by mistake, for free. She'd take it home and steam it with ginger flown in from Vancouver and green onions grown in the garden, one of five crops. The other four? Turnip greens, snow peas, carrots and rocks.

TEACHER: Who do you think you are, little girl?

STUDENT: God's her own Father, and she don't even believe in 'im.

GRANDMOTHER: I was so unhappy then. I'm happy now. Why would I want to remember?

TEACHER: The rock of the Canadian Shield is the hardest rock in the world.
(Laughter.)

Frontal Single Arm-Single Wrist Seizure (level ground and elevated position) from *Practical Karate: For Women*

Situation: An assailant has grabbed your right wrist from the front with his left hand. He is not pushing or pulling you, but insists on merely holding you. You have plenty of room to move around.

English Lessons for Babies (or Horrible Things I Did to my Sister When She was Two and I was Nine)

Hi Rendy.

I'm not Wendy!

I'm Wendy!

Hi Rendy.

I'm not Wendy!

I'm Wendy!

Hi Rendy.

I'm not Wendy!

I'm Wendy!
Hi Rendy.
I'm not Wendy!
I'm Wendy!
Larissa, stop that now.
What? I was trying to say hi to her
And she won't even say hi back.

Mushroom Hunting

In the woods on the highway between Whistler and Pemberton with Hiromi looking for matsutake and finding chanterelles. In the woods behind our house on Malka Drive in St. John's we picked chanterelles two days after a good rain. Strung them up with needle and thread from the sewing box my mother had, an echo of the sewing box my grandmother kept in Hong Kong. My grandmother used to take in sewing when my tennis star grandfather's income as a civil servant for the British Administration was insufficient. We dried our strings of mushrooms on the hooks where we usually hung our coffee mugs. Each mug was decorated with a different Canadian animal. Mine was a seal because I felt sorry for the seals who died in the seal hunt. We were traitorous Mainlander/Greenpeacers then, just like Brigitte Bardot, and against Newfoundland tradition. Everyone knows the seals are responsible for the disappearance of the cod. So here's me, then, just last week, on Coast Salish Territory, just a little short of Lil'wat, finding a bit of Newfoundland with one of my best friends in the world, granddaughter of a Japanese man who built bridges for the Japanese Army to march in to Manchuria.

FLOWER FACTORY GIRL: I pricked my finger. The air was stale. I worked for 72 hours without a rest. There was a fire and not enough exits. My sister died of smoke inhalation.

THE GHOST OF LAM BUN: The leftists doused me with gasoline and set me on fire.

THE GHOST OF YEUNG KWONG: You capitalist roader, you running dog, you CIA

collaborator. You hate your own people. You turn to the decadent West and call that freedom?

THE GHOST OF LAM BUN: You have no love for the people. You love only power. The Great Leader in an emperor in disguise.

GRANDMOTHER (ON THE HYDROFOIL TO MACAU): You see those Europeans? Follow them. They know where the good seats are.

Frontal Single Arm-Cross Single Wrist Seizure from *Practical Karate: For Women*

Situation: A frontal assailant has captured your right wrist in a cross seizure with his right hand. He refuses to release you. You have plenty of room to move around.

California Dreams

Strawberry fields or plastics?
I'm pensive
Slouching towards San Francisco to be born
Forlorn as 20th century's round middle
Its foxy orthodoxies gushing drugs, ideals, sex, and rock
This Spock baby, formula raised
With pointed ears
My fears could roll a Republican primary
single handedly
in second hand shoes.

Second millenium blues sung
from yellow earth
hearth's cold as Beatles tunes on analog
waxed digital
under my satellite's pull.

The full moon croons
only for you dear boomer
your out of tune
is right on the money
I was born in your
yellow submarine dreaming of freedom
only to find its empty carcass
glittering in classrooms and shopping malls
pretty as flower children's power hour
but hollow inside
a helium balloon.

Give me the vision without the televangelist
I'll take the hallucination
the rumination Lucy juices
high in the sky with diamonds
Break on through, yes, breathe on through
I'm you goo joob as the walrus
Is the promise still there?
The doors of perception
could still burst at any moment
When we ran on scholarships, luck
taking the merciful white hand of well-intentioned
professors, you promised the doors would break open
and I still believe.

I receive
my own power of now
Don't follow the buddha
surfing imperial appropriations to find my mirror
has been staged
but all the world's a gauge
Every barrier's a biscuit
my Cerberus howls at satellites
how howoooooooooooooooooooooooooooo

howoooooooooooooooooooooooooooo
ow ow owoooooooooooooooooooooooooooo

Waiting for the Death Star
to recalibrate
burst my planet's inner sanctum
the freedom you promised is only rhetoric
and for this you took my language?

A pox on you! I'll fox ferry it
your doxa's overdose of a cold drug
snows and blows
ices my cranium's sensitive lining.
I'm pining for trees and alchemy
Blake's no mistake I'll claim him
smoking the opium of your 99-year leash
This trip doesn't quite globalize my village
Sewage floods my expanse of paddies
while my nimble fingers acid scratch corridors
on microchips
overtime for iPads
Your perception's doors
standardize seduction
My labour greases the guts.

I'm still pushing don't wanna be
the last angry woman of colour standing
in the killing fields
the rice fields flooded for damnation
powering the electricity of progress
or the field of dreams
screaming
break on through! break on through!
as America dashes to its own destruction.

My China bullshits

your stock exchange
the range of missiles cocked
for surgical
interventions rearranging the body
of earth
And me, I rush back to the birthplace
my mother tongue
flaps dumb as a flag pitched
on the moon
the barren beauty of
our home on native land.