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Two Poems: Sim Caux Suix; Gux-Taaix's Cornbread

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Creative and Literary Works

Two Poems

Janit Von Saechao

Sim Caux Suix

Pricked middle fingers
pull red thread through fabric,
spilling siqv, the same color as the blood
I expect to see surface.

The pulsing pain
reminds me to take a moment
and admire how these hands, at 26
have taught themselves
the tradition of cong-x-cong-x
through three dollar
department-store sewing sets
and scattered youtube searches.

Second generation struggles of
fuqc jueiv hnaangx namx
for reclamation
still yield
divine lessons delivered
in the form of sim caux suix
on the importance of
patience
precision
presence
all combined to create tapestries of
complex perfection
Hnangv mbou ganh nyei reflection.

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Gux-Taaix's Cornbread

The smell of raw corn reminds me of you.
Warm, wrinkled hands
scrubbing sweet kernels against
the same cheese grater
you'd had since I was 4.

All that work for
your favorite cheap meal
made of ga'maeqc
mixed with water
white flower
and sugar
poured into a pan
and patiently waited upon
til toasted golden brown.

You called it ga'maeqc njuov
but it was more like a pancake
than bread.
Pulled apart to reveal sweet,
steaming, sticky goo.
Crispy on the outside
and soft on the inside,
perfect for chomping dentures through.

About the Author

Janit Von Saechao, is a non-binary, indigenous Khmu and Iu Mien writer and creator currently residing in Portland, OR. Born and raised in the East Bay Area, they are the first child of refugees from the U.S. Secret War in Laos. Their pieces are often uncensored documentations of their most vulnerable moments of growth, change and discovery. They recognize that their voice, in its many forms has been the basis of their survival and ability to thrive. Through creating, they explore their relationships with their identities while actively striving toward artistic and cultural preservation for their peoples. They dream of a future for their community that allows them to return to what they have always known—a life that is decolonized and full and free. Follow their work at janitsaechao.com

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