

I AM REMINDED OF MY MOTHER

JIMMY McCARTY

Written in honor of the massacre of eight people, including six Asian American women who were targeted, near Atlanta, GA on March 16, 2021

I am reminded of my mother
when I rinse rice
in cold water.
Swirling it around,
draining it and filling it
until the water runs clear.

I am reminded of my mother
when I am sick
and eat spicy soup
that burns my throat.
She taught me
that the burning means it is killing the germs.

And I am reminded of my mother
when I read the Hyun Jung Grant
enjoyed watching K-dramas.
Because I remember weekend trips
to South Tacoma Way
to return plastic bags
full of Korean VHS tapes
and pick up dozens more.

Jimmy McCarty

I remember my mother
and her birthday cards
that simply read
“I love you, Mom.”
Because writing more in English
was a task too large
when I read that Sun Cha Kim
spoke broken English.

I remember my mother,
after my parents divorced,
moving to Hawai'i to live with friends
and work in Asian restaurants
until she was no longer able
when I read that Soon Chung Park
moved to Atlanta from New York City
to be close to her friends
and work at Gold Spa.

And I am reminded of my mother on her death bed
sending me finger hearts
because she could no longer speak
when I heard that six Asian women were killed
in a mass shooting in Atlanta.

And I hope that someone told them
in English or Korean or Chinese
or through some small gesture
that they were loved
that morning.