

Poems by Champagne Song
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"My Hero"

My hero loves me

My hero protects me

My hero accepts me

My hero is fierce and free

My hero speaks from the heart

My hero expects respect

And demands my best

I look to show me the way

My hero is a wizard and a fae

With plants and cats and tomato sauce

My hero is the home where I stay.

"Judge Pittman's One Man Show"

First he dumped the jury pool with the clever use of the first ever mistrial by T-shirt.

The remarkable solo act continued with his takeover performance of jury selection.

He played both the prosecution and the defense.

He asked all the questions; the ones he saw fit.

And of course, no Black people could be allowed from the first or the second pool.

During the trial, he took the roles of speaking for the prosecution, and the defense, and the witnesses.

Sometimes he played 2 or 3 at a time.

What a talent!

He rounded out his one man show with joke routines and soliloquies.

He threw in flashy anger and snarky comments for all.

The whole trial should have been left up to Judge Pittman.

He played every part.

No need for attorneys or juries or witnesses.

All you need is Mark Pittman's One Man Show.

"Singing Thru The Pepper Spray"

They've locked here the Black folks away
In this old decrepit block
Starving, there's not enough food
Every day wasting away
The cells are filthy with uncovered drains
They call some red tags
Not allowed calls for days
On restrictions for years
Grievances returned and thrown away
Forced beyond breaking
They took him away to suicide watch
Just for singing a sad song
Fuck it, I'm covering my window up
The solidarity is loud with outrage
If they want to play
I'll just spray
Not scared, I've been sprayed
Not easy to be brave in this painful haze

I see the brilliant spinning contraption
In the taqueria down my street
Where we go after protests, before parties
And always have enough to eat
I hold in my hand shwarma, gyro, doner, al pastor
Smiling at them in my mind side by side

Note: Trompo or al pastor is a classic Mexican street food cooked on the vertical turning grill spit. It was introduced to Mexico by Lebanese refugees fleeing from Israeli occupation. It's cooked on the same device and in similar style to other food relatives: shwarma, gyro, and doner which all mean 'turning' or 'rotating' in their respective languages. It is a staple of street tacos in Texas, thanks in part to the waves of migration caused by the dispossession of traditional communal lands in Mexico. This privatization of land was enforced by NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement), designed by American capitalists and corporations and pushed and finalized by President Bill Clinton.

Shredded cabbage and tangy plum
I see police interrogating a hungry man
Gobbling the famous katsudon.

*Note: A little known fact of westernization and modernization
is the spread of carnism, eating meat. Japanese and many
others typically did not eat land animals.*

“El Trompo, Al Pastor Refugee to Refugee”

When I see El Trompo turning I see the turning of many lands
I see Israeli boots on Beirut streets
I see parents vowing never again
I see Lebanese youths unpacking the shwarma
Introducing Mexico to vertically spinning meats
I see families impoverished by NAFTA
Fleeing former communal land
Crossing rivers and invisible lines
To the lands lost to the war Where Juan Seguin, a hero Was
chased out from his home

But six strong voices ring out in song
Singing thru the pepper spray

"The Years of the Trump Tax"

I will tax your foreign goods
And on my throne grow large

I will gamble with your lives
And ever my stock and fortune rise

I will sue you for myself
And with you settle my own debts

The people grow less and less
Let all their wealth diminish

But my corrupt and chosen few
My sons and officials feed insatiable

Upon your lives and homes
Let forests burn
And health care fall
Leave hungry babes to cry

I will eat out your sustenance
In the years of the Trump Tax

"To Know is Not Enough"

Many a miserly soul would watch a child be beat And think to
themselves:

"I believe no child should be beaten"

Then Proceed self-satisfied and self-content
Your hidden beliefs mean little
Little to those who could help you
Little to those you could help
You must express yourself widely
Paint the world with your brush
Do what is right, fix what is wrong

*Note: Loco Moco is part of the fusion cuisine of Hawaii, like
spam musubi and Portuguese egg tart. My mom's family came
to work on plantations in the century before last. I spent
summers there as a child and still feel a connection to the
islands. After decades of struggle, and US bases poisoning
sailors, people, and land. Hawaiian Sovereignty is a rising
issue. I know I will see the islands free again. My partner and I
love making vegan loco Moco. You should try it too.*

"Tonkatsu, Westernization Means Meats"

When I see Tonkatsu I see pounded schnitzel and a lemon
Shining white Vienna streets
I see Buddhist families reviling in horror
Live cargo unloaded from Black Ships
I see factories and ranches popping up
Railroads and trains puffing white smoke
I see Meiji-heika in Prussian dress
I see neon lit Tokyo streets
Little places full of salarymen

Fried egg, brown gravy, hamburger patty, two scoops white
rice, two scoops macaroni salad

I see Kanaka Maoli, the people of the land

I see the Kingdom where my family moved

Stolen by missionaries, plantation owners, and US Marines

With no greater excuse than civilization and destiny

I see Japanese laborers in the plantation fields

Who love nothing like sweet white rice

I see my grandma in the pineapple plant

I see silver warships steaming into Pearl

Bags of flour that read U.S. Property

I see cattlemen wearing cowboy hats

Green valleys and territorial police

I see my great Oba-chan picking flowers

While Zero-sen fighters fly overhead

I see beach resorts and white neighborhoods

I see diseases, obesity, and poverty spread

I see my partner smiling at our food

So big family gatherings, at Grandma Kaya's house

Happy kids eating plate lunch at the beach park

Because Loco Moco is really delicious

To know is not enough

“When I See Budae Jjigae”

When I see Budae jjigae

I see US occupation

War devastation

Korean mothers forced to sex work

To get a few cans of spam

Or Vienna sausages

I see new industrialization

Mass market consumerism

In the instant ramen noodles

I see a long history of resilience

In the kimchi that's thrown in

When you have nothing

Make kimchi, and survive

I see young faces laughing

Around pretty boiling pots
Nostalgia for an earlier time
When things seemed simple
And people had big dreams

When the world is change
I see Budae jigae being made.

Notes: Budae Jigae 'Army Stew' is a post-Korean War dish made with inexpensive scraps in South Korea. The core ingredients are Spam and Vienna sausages acquired from US soldiers. The US continued some of the Japanese 'comfort women' system of military brothels and coerced and government promoted sex work. Instant ramen noodles, invented in Japan after WWII to use American wheat imports, later mass produced in South Korea as well. And kimchi, the traditional Korean staple of spicy fermented cabbage (kind of like sauerkraut). Today, it's a popular social gathering food among young people. More than 2 million people were killed in the Korean War, mostly civilians. The US, South Korea, and North Korea conducted atrocities and massacres.

“De-homed”

In 1621, I found pilgrims in my house
In 1812, the soldiers of the Gerrymander burned my cabin and still
In 1868, the white league torched my farm
In 1876, Custer burned my village down
In 1921, the lynch mob bombed my street
In 1956, the highway crushed my town
In 1979, Trump burned my apartment down
In 2006, The Cowboys took my mama's house
I have always been de-homed
You may call it gentry-fied
But the gentlemen use fire and guns

"Loco Moco, Food of Hawaii"

When I see Loco Moco