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# Domusphere: and other poems

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DOMUSPHERE: AND OTHER POEMS

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Fine Arts

in

The Department of English

by

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## ABSTRACT

This collection of poems aims to explore the ways that language institutionalizes and perpetuates various forms and degrees of sexism, racism, and ageism. The poems highlight the untidy and imperfect nature of the prescriptive grammar of English language through the introduction of internet slang and Kongrish.

## SECTION 1 THE DIARY PART

hello lotus blossom

go ahead—

plink a pair of chopsticks against  
a jangly assortment of metal dinner bowls.

lotus blossom, the good girl from China,  
always pitted against the skank-monster, Suzie Wong.

what did Nancy Kwan do  
but to ooze the kind of sex  
that made people afraid?  
(a yellow pearl stuck in the back of your throat)

lotus blossom, let's make a chart:

Madonna // Whore  
a bottle of Dolly Girl, puckering // a purring, growling Ling Woo  
Anna May Wong // Anna May Wong

what's in between?  
(you, me, Yumi's webcam)

websites that target Asiaphiles are black body vaults,  
stacked with import models, squatting against the glint of a Honda ricer.

fathers spill untruths over a dinner of a bed of rice, a miniature array of pickles—  
*better off to marry a girl from Han-Guk, less slutty, more good.*

*Mi-Guk // me, gook?*



here are some fortune cookie truths  
to be planted in our neighborhood restaurants:  
*I do a victory shimmy before I get some.*  
*Happiness resides at the end of my shunt.*

welcome to my room

lack of tragic here

I check my phone 150 times a day  
if you want magic try rearranging the dust motes of this room

thin side of silk wears a bed pinched by the ceiling  
suspicious enough to uncover a bassinet in the nest  
the cock is super alert now

gasp a spiky spool inside  
(look what you've done!)

no really what now

(it's wonderful to see you so awfully ajar)

(take a dose of *Omg*)

(await the results)

—it's not enough so I add zebra prints to it

apply the bleach in places so a pluck everything  
*no* dissolves itself into a—

(this is when everything spirules into lines)

(made sense of the kohl like yes)

(a gleeful we likey!)

The Diary of a K-Drama Villain

the she shovels her hooves into unwilling participants

*blah blah blah*

she is high social ranking like him

a gumiho with her Miguk education  
sky high micro minis like she's idle  
uppity English spasms of *excuse me!*

*blech* enough about her...

let's watch  
doubles fighting each other and someone's gonna lose a tooth

this is so sexual.....I suppose

and god  
chop up your bananas to eat them outside  
no one looks attractive while eating on the bus

she digs into her LV bag  
*no one understands what I'm going through!*

blissed out

I hatha cuz I plummet liquid worry I'm a sno-globe swimming in slouching sad which massive blips into white wine bliss I recognize those eyes in myselfie the glint of knowing who that be legging fierce stomping down the shining moving airport sidewalk in her Lulu the crystallization of descending swirling was foggy disease I know me cept that my iPhone is shattered so is brain blitzed into oblivion revived to cold wetness with black hole in myselfie cannot visualize myselfie

all fails spectatorly

a character charades shamelessly

shows off that digital curl that costly coil that plugging into your noggin

into hot holes so that her hair becomes blank enough stuff

watch us ooze through song & tongue meat & *collapse!*

\*more flopping\*

bad rad

hey so and so, get in my bed!

touchy feelers resound in a giant *that's not hot*

a serving splay of sliding finger candy  
in awkward decor  
cornucopic tastelessness

know the value of a pityfuck = everything

(awwwww)  
group sorry face

bew hew

(eat the teardrops of a  
bejeweled zuzu)



yellow pearls in edible drops to stomach

our flops in perf English

*I really like the swings  
(me neither!)*

how many ways to utter *song*

iterate reiterate  
sever

how many ways to utter *dog*

when there is something pretty and cute  
and nice, it's something to be fucked with  
ask the Surrealists—

you know when you smile like that  
it's not very natural  
*(but this is my face)*

*(but what do I know about)  
(opening my mouth like I'm being—)*

one of these is unlike the others  
unlike any other

(you are no like the others)

to be said monosyllabically with an accompanying clap for each word

are. you. dumb. or. just. can't. speak. -ing-lish.

when her receding hairline comes into view

getting *pama* the boiling perms  
the hands-in-the-air-if-you-don't-really-care  
surrender into menopause

a compulsory moment of silence for the women who fed  
who cleaned who lactated who ate meds for the lactating to stop

when there is the freshest greenest new mother with her still long hair  
others longingly stare  
it's a sheet unstoppable cascade of in-your-face selfishness

*you know that Agaci flaunts her before-childness  
her Forever 21*

my hair isn't blank enough stuff

blanking blank

they can see into our future when  
the sea of curly mop hairs comes into view  
with green soft scalp peeking through

sea of faces that cringe and primp the bottoms of their hairs  
in the row of red vinyl beautician chairs as they explain  
how their scalp is especially tender  
(an extra please on the bump)

## SECTION 2 CRYING SELFIES

crying selfie

a giant disaster flare of a person screams:

someone make this happen  
& it would be  
the most precious thing!  
(don't tell me you told them though)

satisfactorily like the sound of cheesecake  
spreading itself onto the concrete  
*scrape.....scrape.....scrape*

# of people who RSVP'ed today: 0  
(lols I am so embarrassed)



how to be

may you look over  
dreamy fault lines

leak out  
caulking cream

in this skinsuit of mine  
in the bones that brittle  
the innards that remain pinking

self-contained & open &  
bleeding & polymorphous

(here is my permission 4 u 2 shimmy 4th)



“Suicide attacks kills 13 people in Iraq”

(shimmy 4th & continue *bzz bzzt*)

Facebook perfection  
really takes a lot

hoovering is sexy now

look at you wriggling like a pro  
add a smattering of dishes against the wall

instead of telling them I love them  
I will smooth a paddle brush against their hairs

if your sweetie is an investment banker  
dump him and he's left with no friends

plate the ceramic dish with trinkets in the shape  
of miniature desserts in the breakfast nook

if your guests say *this is creepy* then smile  
say you ordered matching drinks in the same melt

worms are nature's  
weight loss pills

I feel weird...

happy feasting

ordered a baker for Valentine's to make us  
solid soufflés patty cake warm so pretty

treating myself so turn off phone and dip my feet  
let the fish skin on my dead skins

our plans flopped

all is smeared besmirched

scratch at my tender belly  
with the finger with the diamond to get what  
!  
!  
!  
!

!  
!  
!

*(what exactly)*

once it's done

it is so worth it  
you are proud of yourself

list of the curvy dodgings

- [ a ] manila folder labeled GROWING SECRETS
- [ b ] mini palette of makeups
- [ c ] glitter bomb waiting to un-burst in ribbons
- [ d ] bowl of sugar squeals, shared by two

occult universe

don't create a whole new // avatar  
to answer *Yahoo!* questions

like *why are Asians so smart*

instead go to each of their homes  
play them a clip of Shiba Inus  
scrrreeching in hot botched water

caterpillars in your ears as the winter thaws  
the talk unfurls feathers

at a wings eatery I was asked if my vagina ran sideways  
but there is a deeper meaning to all of this



a poem

*after Apollinaire's heart*

I wanna tattoo after watching the words  
of a book melt itself onto my fingertips after  
your text made me sweat

your ass is like  
a peach  
upside down

## SECTION 3 DOMUSPHERE

a laying on of hands

I think all kinds of broken because  
asking if smell okay but get no answer  
then *nooooo-okay*

let's take a spacious vacation

step in front of the black gym floor  
open your hands and admit *I don't know how to do this*

feel like

I was afraid to talk about  
what felt like my uterine lining  
under someone else's fingernails

(hands on desk)  
but I am here to talk about my foreign puss

\*

I am running out of time

\*

still delaying the same

\*

explaining  
feels like  
bag of legs on my shoulders  
like it is never ending  
the twinning of limbs  
which pressures me

cute thoughts  
bad thoughts...

\*

cannot stop until  
I'm unhappy with my flesh  
I X out my O's

\*

slip on  
a skirt that says *let's go*



useless meats

atrophy

I no longer tramp long walks

Why practice when different looks draw conspicuous looks?

A tongue's hardening, glutinous and gluttoned:

the way my bowl appears as I wash my rice for the first time, fizzing.

the third time, clear                    way to view language purification

(putrification?)



knees on wooden floor

*what small bullshit will I scrump today*

please don't like me only because I am familiar comfortable like sweatpants

sure I could warm my own yogurt behind the fridge  
save a few plastic cups

but where would I squeeze the milk?  
where is this cow?  
where is my pasture?

as I like myself I think  
if I get this *thing* I will be okay!

this is a lie  
stop telling myself this lie

if I feel like *swamp* be swamp

then my finger starts to twitch uht uh no shakes

I search the web for right index tremors

I get:

Parkinson's  
carpel tunnel  
stress

When I am afraid I don't know how to read a book  
or make comments about book  
but I do I touch it first

domosphere

\*

Today a clear glassed heavy crystalline  
Shinto morning

(when I say *crystalline* would LYL approve?  
is there such a thing as a perfect, fitting word for each occasion  
of a single word?)

\*

The Today's Show's Hoda Kotb reminds us the good habit  
of drinking a full glass of water every morning.

*Think about it—we normally go 7-8 hours without drinking water as we're asleep!*  
I think she said

\*

In my gray cubicle  
I stare at the small ripped page  
Kahlo Frida | What the Water Gave Me

I answer:  
A lot, sure we are not who we are with water

without, even

but we are allowed multitudes with water  
solitudes

\*

Hoda, do you know that there is an amoeba  
gliding in my brain jelly  
from the waters of where you used to live?

\*

I spend much of my adult life by pouring larger, economy-sized containers into smaller, more manageable containers. For examples, I pour a gallon-sized jug of white vinegar into a cooking hand-friendly bottle on the countertop. I pour the generic brand of fresh mint mouthwash into a container that lives under my sink, for easy access. Pour the giant container of my feelings (lye), funneling them into a smaller, manageable drain. Out of my body, down the hairy hole.

\*

dress altered, hemline unfashionable still

must steam extra rice then freeze in bags (wait, must buy appropriate freezer bags first)

buy work slacks because of Wednesday coupon but buy another pair because super duper sale

white washed walls covered in some invisible stain and stink, wipe w/ solvent (as with bag, must purchase solvent first, hopefully pet-friendly, wouldn't want to be ungreen)

\*

can I tell you what is really in this room? a roach who doesn't tire of collecting her pearls. an imposter fusion buffet, crusting at the stove

I only write when I feel the weight of patriarchy sitting juicy on my sternum, like Janet Jackson's cover of Rolling Stone. so I don't know if I love writing but I know that I like to look at writing as it writes itself so handsomely, *what a good girl, doing work, right now!*

\*

out of sight out of my. tony thighs that ensure a stack of chicken breasts in the fridge. salted. a boiled boredom

don't microwave THANK YOU bags from the store. don't microwave chip bags to make a miniature LAY'S for your dollhouse. stop chip science

\*

a coterie of votaries for my honey. a homesick fragrance for when I miss fish sauce, the thick kind that has the eyes of small shrimp embedded like seeds. slip into pages of cabbage in a rash of red

hot and heavy and heady. sloshing the meats and upheaving desire

cold morning obsessions. a hot pot

\*

I am always walking in your wake, H

always a step, a book behind  
trying to hoard thoughts while walking

distraction

Children holler their games

\*

talk-making can be so exhausting, exhuming all weirdness for public consumption

doumi: meaning *helper*, conjures the dom. sphere, usually dances, flirts with, entertains, pours drinks for patrons

related: booking      related: kisaeng

local LA club has hosted Shaquille O'Neal for his birthday, so *in* now!

business name: *Honey* or hah-ni

\*

I think of all this as I bear the trouble over what to make for a double date dinner:  
some sort of appe (easy for travel)

maybe some sort of crostini, artichoke tapenade on crostini...but our oven's broken, a mouse has made home, then graved in it

then my dog was mad at me, passed each other in the hall like cold roommates

\*

the old gloomies. this is the time I wonder if I could learn to backward bend. but my bones so rickety crickety. I would leave rooms this way if I got a California wanton nature of obliviousness. obviously I had to neglect their ribbons of diversity song and show them what's what. make them confront my very poor and incorrect posture

carry out the recyclables. run the dishwasher. scale the coffeemaker and let the vinegar brew and prune my nosehairs

\*

I trapped myself w/ a false sense of bourgeois: I am never separate from this

But how much I depended on nice things...

but also how I don't know how to use dainty embroidered tea towels...!



\*

I feel heavy. we're invited for Italian food. I don't think the hosts drink...  
I click open a piece of email: If you sign up for EasyPay, you can stand to win an iPad

\*

Why don't you want me

I taught you how  
to jazz up a cake

step outside of your head for once

let cicadas get you

\*

eating breakfast and checking emails on phone  
no growth like eating alone

more offers for laser hair removal at a steep discount  
(how did they know I had this “hair problem”...!  
that I count each and every hair of the pubic mound and pits  
then tweeze them off at new discoveries...!)

\*

it used to be easy to say I didn't own a TV but now that there is a black dusty beauty sitting pretty  
in my living room. it is hard to sputter without laughing. I may not have cable but I know all  
about your fucking business

the sad state of our soils. migrating chemical bleeds into morning tea. contrary to popular belief,  
guidelines are just as dull, just as much until the paradigm shift

\*

why is your skin so scratchy so unnatural. let's keep up. lotion warning, got it? what is this  
question. why so questioning

\*

Sundays are for vacuuming airing  
of rooms secrets discontent

Occupied well-worned arguments

Remember to take small dog for walking

You both will enjoy it without much talk

\*

Big Butts Mean Smarter Faster Healthfuller Brains Says Science. on my newsfeed. More  
Excuses to Display My Dimpling Ass Says Min. Don't We Need To See More Disembowling Of  
Kimmy K Says Earth

stop inviting people. more bodies to witness your squalor. I mean you take nice time to squeak  
up whatever, but really, who is fooling what of whom

\*

Hurl self, sick-making

I have already eschewed exotic upbringing, swallowed slips of cut hair to rid self of wrongs  
how much further do I shove my Buddhist beads down my throat hole

how much more *gone* can I be

\*

What is the use in *use*?

I once grabbed an egg from the fridge  
instead of milk for my coffee.

Am I useless?

Trapped by busyness, a system of wringing the clothes on my back, while showering.  
I reopen the fridge and place the egg in its styrofoam keeper.

\*

Continuing to ignore housework as a feminist act

I am doing that thing again where I judge others for doing but doing it myself

I read another email: They drink. Bring wine

Feeling heavy with a knowing a setting of tomb that I do not know what I am doing

I drive 6 blocks instead of walking to pick up four slices of tiramisu

\*

most beautiful jellies to flutter and ajar. cook up some milk cup and finger cocoa into it. sit with your butter cup. try not to worry if sleep looks much like death

someone once splashed his luxury vehicle in front of me. I pushed him into the dirt and ripped the keys and vroomed it out of there. I was later caught while stuck in a drive-thru window of a Burger King at Tulane and Carrollton. good times

## VITA

Min K. Kang was born in Busan, South Korea, and was raised in North Texas. She lives in New Orleans and studies poetry at Louisiana State University. She is a Kundiman fellow and a former co-coordinator of the Delta Mouth Literary Festival in Baton Rouge. Her work has been published in *Asia Literary Review*, *Santa Clara Review*, *TENDE\_RLOIN*, *Where Are You From?: An Anthology of Asian American Writing*, *Tender: a Quarterly Journal Made by Women*, *As/Is*, and elsewhere.