

## FEARLESS AT 90

a poem by YURI KAGEYAMA

I am fearless at 90

Wrinkles deep as the Nile

Hair translucent spiderwebs

Varicose veins throbbing blood

A map of fate on a carcass of skin

I am fearless at 90

I rap poetry with my dentures

Jazz dance with my wobbly knees

I rock like Jimi Hendrix

We Boomers invented Revolution

I am fearless at 90

I'm so close to the pearly gates

I'm on speaking terms with the angels

I'm so near-sighted I read minds

My fungus breath slays dragons

I am fearless at 90

My wheelchair zips Ferrari-style

My voice resonates five octaves low

My cane duplicates as a samurai sword

My hearing aid just blocks out noise

I am fearless at 90

I have no appointments to keep

No bosses to please

No dates to impress

No one can put me down

I am fearless at 90

I barely remember what's up or down

Or who is where anymore;

Beyond gender, race, class,

Or even age

I am fearless at 90

My skin like washi paper  
My fingers gnarled like a witch  
I am neither man nor woman  
White, black, brown or yellow.  
I am just 90, and fearless:

Those days are long gone,  
Not trusting anyone over 30,  
I've given birth to a thousand children  
And have a million grandchildren  
I am fearless at 90

Although death is around the corner,  
I've seen war and peace  
Endured abuse to survive;  
Don't expect or need respect  
I'm proud to be fearless at 90

NOTE FROM THE POET:

I am not yet 90, but I feel this way and wrote this poem. When I'm 90, I will write my real fearless-at-90 poem.

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## THE BROKEN FRAME

a poem by YURI KAGEYAMA

The ambulances are screaming. We look up and see a big tear in a steel frame right by our apartment building. We wonder but figure it's not a murder because we don't read about it, and there aren't that many murders in Tokyo. Every time we see the broken frame, we wonder who it could have been. And what might have driven this individual, whom we don't know and never will know, male or female, young or old, happy or unhappy, probably unhappy, literally over the ledge to a dark deep definitive leap of death. It does not make us feel very good. Every time we see that broken frame. A few weeks later, the frame gets fixed. And we stop wondering.