

Anti

Decrepit Dreams by Qui-Shawn Tien Tran

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In Memory of *Vicha Ratanapakdee & Noel Quintana*

My people are dying.
What does it mean to be Asian
American in America?

Cause racism labels us as carriers,
Media blocks our voices with barriers,
And people treat us with hysteria.

8:28 AM, San Francisco,
84 year old man pushed
through the window from life to death
In 2 short moments
his head
hits the pavement
his brain
gets wasted and
the aggressor
is labeled innocent
Or at least not guilty . . .

For pushing a man off of his feet,
down to the ground where every single scent and sense is
shut down,
He dies
2 days later.
He was a father, a grandfather

He had grandsons and a daughter
His life was not meant to be caught up
In Anti-Asian American Hate, but hey,
this is the place we call America,
“All Asians have it great.”

My people are dying
compressed onto concrete
My people are dying
can you cultivate compassion?
More than just a tweet?

I'm tired of being ignored and excused
Hate crimes stay on the rise and criminals stay loose
Senseless violence,
Infused with xenophobia and half truths
And you probably didn't know half of it,
It's actively hidden from me and you

This hate is a virus upheld by media's radio silence

Every minute of every day, my Asian
brothers and sisters, attacked from all sides
Every minute of every day, my Asian
uncles and aunties, fearful for their lives
Every minute of every day, my Asian
skin is a target for somebody's "bad day"

The very people who swear on red white and blue are

silent

when the killings are of black, brown, or yellow toned hues

What does it mean to be Asian

American in these times?

Is it just a stereotype of being good

at math, staying quiet, and coding complex lines?

Is it just a label we sweep under

the rug because "Asians have it good enough"

I am tired of this shit, these stereotypes are our handcuffs

February 5th, bright early morning, San Jose,

64 year old Asian grandma robbed of 1k

A thousand dollars swindled before new year celebrations

Why the fuck are people targeting my grandparent's

generation

The same day across the country

Filipino man slashed on the subway

His kind smile, lacerated and laced by a hundred stitches

Because people could tolerate the hate

While not coming to his aid

Every single gaze stayed away

While a blade shredded into his face

Is this how scars are made?

Deeper
Than the ones just on our skin
The hidden ones that
remain within
cage hearts in prisons
keep us sickened
pass down to our children

Their lives were not meant to be caught up
In Anti Asian American Hate, but hey,
this is the place we call America,
“All Asians have it great.”

Everywhere in the news
An orchestrated performance,
A radicalized ruse
A dopamine hit,
A witty hook, or
Bait for a click
They censor us from the truth,
And the full representation of it.

May my voice be a torch
To share how my brothers and sisters have been ignored

My people are dying.
What does it mean to be an Asian
American guy in
A system that labels us half

of a man

Sickening stereotypes plague us before we can understand

the model minority, a myth, held by the majority

Limits us creatively, recycles the conspiracy

That Asian Americans are at odds with other minorities

When fundamentally, we are just human beings

This racism turns us into the biggest socially acceptable
parody

Chink, zipperhead, chow mein, ling ling, coolie, dink, slant-eye,

Ching chong, gook, dog eater, bat eater, Chinese virus, kung

fu flu

It's all been said before,

We breathe in these violent fumes

In and out until we reach our tombs

It's a crippling anomaly cloaked in invisibility

Because while people

Type on their screens

Proclaim on their screens

Scream at their screens

That we all have it good

It discounts every tragedy that ever occurred,

It takes our history and blurs it to be obscured

We too, have rocks thrown upon our shoulders

Backpacks of our youth carry expectations the size of
boulders

Slopes we climb to be labelled equal,
labelled people leave our breathing shorter
Hopes we aspire to are crushed
to conform to the stereotypical orders
But not for me, not any longer

What does it mean

to be Asian American in America?
Racism labels us as carriers,
Media blocks our voices us with barriers, and
People treat us with hysteria.

The Asian American experience
Is like living with an abusive in-law family,
Your new blood, your new country
Looking out for everyone else
Then forgetting
 you have got to stand up for yourself
Regretting
 you forgot to save enough love for yourself
Realizing
 you are taken for granted even when you're going
through hell
Then Deciding
 you are worth more than anyone can tell you
And never ever compromising
 how you see yourself

This is my **Asian**

This is my **American**
This is my **Experience**

One I am unashamed to tell.

Qui-Shawn Jensen