

Cherry-Picking “Korean-American”

An American Born Korean
Born on American soil, the city of Northampton
Only to have Korean roots, anchors of my soul

“Too Korean” they whisper low
“Too American” they murmur faintly
My identity blurs, torn between two extremes
Why cherry-pick “Korean American?”

To appease their egos
The scale rocks back and forth
The balance is tipped
Korean when it suits them, and
American when its best
For them but not for me.

I am defined.
Not Korean,
But American

An insult to my roots, deep and ancient
My tan, *non conforming to “beauty”*
My broken Korean, *my tongue’s shameful shackle*
My loudness, *rude and coarse*

Once again, I am defined.
Not American,
But Korean

An insult to childhood, American
My kimchi, *a flavor they can never love*
My drive, *the typical Asian*
My glasses, *a stereotypical ID*

“Korean,”
“American,”
Labels that lack nuance
A stamp, a puzzle, bearing missing pieces
But I am more than some whispers and murmurs
Rather a mosaic, a blend of cultures, and more

Unapologetically, I embrace my duality

I am more than the hyphen that is shown
A bridge between heritage, stories and lands
In this symphony of identities, my melody I adore

Proudly this time, I declare:
I am an American Born Korean.

#USvsHate