makes our regrets scattered as apologies.
We did not expect them
to rip the coat of pride from your bones
nor the melody from your throat.
    Yes, there is much to say.
We will not leave your memory
as a silent rancid rose.
Our tongues become livid with history and
demands for reparations.
Crimes are revealed like the bloody lashes
of a fallen whip:
    the falsehoods, deletions, the conspiracy
to legalize mass imprisonment.
No, we will not forget
    Amache Gate, Rohwer, Poston, Heart Mountain,
    Minidoka, Jerome, Gila River, Manzanar,
    Topaz, Tule Lake.
Our tongues are sharp like blades,
we overturn furrows of secrecy.
    Yes, we will harvest justice.
And Uncle, perhaps
your spirit will return
alive in a horse, or a bird,
riding free in the wind,
life surging through
the sinews of your strong shoulders.
    And yes,
the struggle continues on
with our stampede of voices.

Janice Mirikitani, *Shedding Silence*

Soul Food

For Cecil

We prepare
the meal together.
I complain,
hurt, reduced to fury
again by their
subtle insults
insinuations
because I am married to you.
Impossible autonomy, no mind
of my own.

You like your fish
crisp, coated with cornmeal,
fried deep,
sliced mangos to sweeten
the tang of lemons.
My fish is raw,
on shredded lettuce,
lemon slices thin as skin,
wasabe burning like green fire.
You bake the cornbread flat
and dip it in
the thick soup
I've brewed from
turkey carcass, rice gruel,
sesame oil and chervil.
We laugh over watermelon
and bubbling cobbler.

You say,
there are few men
who can stand
to have a woman equal,
upright.

This meal,
unsurpassed.

Spoils of War

Violet ran up the familiar path of Telman Park determined today to make five miles. She knew the exact spot of her destination, through the eucalyptus, past the emergency telephone box, up to the twin boulders where she would sit triumphantly and rest in the warm sun.

He watched her from his green volkswagen van. Her black hair bouncing at her shoulder blades, her sturdy thighs and sleek runner's calves. Her small breasts jostled with each step under the sweatshirt that read, "Lotus Blossom Doesn't Live Here".

Spirit of the bayonet.
red/harch
white/hup
blue/eyes front
square your piece
left/right
kill 'em
thrust/jab
jab
jab/kill 'em.
"hey mamasan,
joto mate ichiban"
poontang one/two
poontang three/four
when we're done
we'll kill some more.

Of all the joggers he saw, this was the one he wanted. He would park and watch the several who, at the same time each day, would run the path up into the wooded hills of