

## Malaga Island *Re.Past* Documentation v97

Yoon Soo Lee

I have not yet buried my parents. But I am grieving their loss.

I have not yet buried my parents. Yet I have buried them in my heart.

I have not yet buried my grandmother. Even as she lays in her grave. The grandma who raised me, the one who loves me.

My grandmother lives with me now. In how I comfort my child, my mind, my life.

I am an adult child of narcissistic parents. Parents who cannot see beyond their needs. My grief is for the lost parents. The parents that never were. My grief is for their love. The love that never was. Squatters of my mind. Squatters that won't leave.

The *Re.Past* dinner is coming. To honor the dead. Who is the living. Who is the dead. Who is being mourned. Who is mourning.

I watch myself as I prepare for the *Re.Past* — as I gather DEET wipes, rain boots and hats.

The preparation for the *Re.Past* dinner involves reckoning with fears—ticks, mosquitos and poison ivy at its worst.

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It turns out death, or is it living, was the fear — I long for death like nothing else, for then I can go back to being a rock. Or sand. Or part of an earthworm.

The pain of existing will be wooed into calm. I become part of the earth again. Back in her bosom. Never to be alone again.

I prepare our wardrobe: for husband, child and myself. I make white clothes so we can see ticks. That crawl up our legs. That crawl up our sleeves. White clothes are worn — at funerals in Korea. My husband is Tanzanian. And my child is a new. Tall boots, white clothes, hats and a satchel. We are ready to greet Malaga.

The *Re.Past* dinner.

We are on the island. The wind is blowing. The sun shines bright. Did I hear water? Or am I remembering the songs.

The students are focused. Serving the guests. With poetry, cider and soup — so rich. So studious.

Time is suspended — where am I? Who am I? A friend asks me — if you could be anywhere, anytime in history, where and when would you be?

I would be a rock at the beginning of time. Submerged in water. Watching the first single cell organisms. Blossom and procreate.

Yet here I am. In the 21st century. Blossoming and procreating. With my little family. Attending the Malaga Island *Re.Past* dinner.

Honoring the dead.  
Honoring the removed.  
Honoring the banished.  
Honoring the confined.  
Honoring the condemnation.  
Honoring the horror.

William was the baby. Removed from his home. To be sent to an asylum. To live and die there.

I walk, talk and eat. Alive yet detached and unmoved. As if I connect to the true content of what happened here on this island, I might fall through the cracks of earth. Never to gain light again.

The cruelty of humanity. The inexhaustible need for consumption — as Malaga Island was cleared out for development, for rich white folks — no end to desire, riches and wealth. Greed and privilege. No end in sight. Squatters they were. In this North America. Squatters we all are. Never to leave.

I walk like a ghost. Moving but not living. Suspended between the living and dead.

Who is being mourned. Who is mourning. In between the living, in between the dead. Walking like a ghost. Mourning the living. Mourning the dead.



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