



# Hard Love Province: Poems

*Marilyn Chin*

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**Hard Love Province: Poems** Marilyn Chin

**Winner of the 2015 Anisfield-Wolf Prize for Poetry**

**From a poet of "dazzling longing" (*Los Angeles Times*), a stunning new collection of haunting elegies and playful quatrains.**

Marilyn Chin is a poet acclaimed by Adrienne Rich for her "powerful, uncompromised, and unerring" poems. Dancing brilliantly between Eastern and Western forms, fusing ancient Chinese history and contemporary American popular culture, she is one of the most celebrated Asian-American poets writing today.

Chin's fourth volume of poems, *Hard Love Province*, is composed of erotic elegies in which the speaker grieves for the loss of her beloved. In "Void" she writes with the imagistic, distilled quietude of a solitary mourner: "It's not that you are rare / Nor are you extraordinary // O lone wren sobbing on the bodhi tree / You are simple and sincere." In "Formosan Elegy," by contrast, she is that mourner, beyond simplicity or quietude, crying out for a lover: "I sing for you but my tears have dried in my gullet / Walk the old dog give the budgies a cool bath / Cut a tender melon let it bleed into memory."

Here, too, are poems inspired by Chin's poetic forbearers and mentors? Dickinson, Plath, Ai, Gwendolyn Brooks, Tu Fu, Adrienne Rich, and others? honoring their work and desecrating the global injustice they addressed. "Whose life is it anyway?" she asks in a poem for Rich, "She born of chrysalis and shit / Or she born of woman and pain?"

Emotionally nuanced and electric with high-flying verbal experimentation, image after image, line by line, Chin's spectacular reinventions, her quatrains, sonnets, allegories, and elegies, are unforgettable.

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