NOEL YU-JEN

the godspell according to Mary Magdalene (La Malinche, Marina, Malintzin, etc.)*

empire	self	empire
	Sisters — it is impossible	impuesto, impossible guilt.
y (土; tierra) tu mamá? des- cubre la misma	to condemn them. How they love my mouth this sick speaking self.	mouth limp, a sick piece of self-effacing leather. I create new
so- le dad que la mía. Ay,	So let me orate this matrimony; I am not worthy of empire.	matrilineal boundaries: worthy women who do not seek empire, just
el oro no se queda	Or was it empire that was not worthy of me?	empire, just
dor- ado ni se-	Remember: my mother sold me first she said <i>say nothing</i> & instead	<i>sed:</i> a secret translating laughter into water. & I am
creto	I was glorious, preaching illusive the spiel all unnecessary for the two halves of me,	perched on her throat, always spilling my makeshift meandering mess, a
ma; no puedo (quiero) re- cordar. no quiero of-	relishing the relic of my feral face	relic of self.
recer más bai- le ni oración ni pai-	hiding my own stuttering shadow.	
saje ni cuerpo que digo claro, que no lo hay.	I will cut my tongue out of the portrait first, then follow	
	with maroon paint	

* Malintzin (also known as Marina or La Malinche) was an Aztec woman who rose through the ranks of her enslavement under the Spanish conquest to ultimately become a translator & emissary between empires. She has since been reclaimed by Chicana feminists as the "mother of mestizos." As the multitude of her given names suggest, she wielded much multiplicity in the languages she spoke, and the political stations she occupied.

Noel Yu-Jen is a storyteller-musician from the California coast. She received the Holmes National Poetry Prize from Princeton and was a 2022 Bucknell Seminar for Undergraduate Poets fellow and a 2023 Roots. Wounds. Words. poetry fellow. Her work appears in *diode* and *Ghost City Review*, among others. She writes about creation myth, translanguaging, geneaology, and currently lives in Brooklyn.