



“Life Lines”

You were once told by a palm reader that you have a strong life line. She knew you would marry your husband from a deep, elegant curve to your love line. She counted the lines of your fate like the rings of a great oak, splaying out the soft bark of your flesh. Long fingers and broad palms. Hands fit for a wife and mother. She told you that you would have multiple children and a long marriage. So you followed that line across the sea, to Canada, where you would give birth to me.

I am left to trace your maternal lines, wondering why she failed to see that your hands are also those of an artist's. I am sorry she failed to warn you of the bruises to come, or the dreams under your nails from clawing out of a marriage that buried you under a lifetime.

I am now the same age as you were back then. I have the same soft, wood palms. Willow fingers. The broken skin of a daughter. But whenever you take my hand in yours, you tell me that I have the hands of a writer.

By Letitia Lim