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Poem by Eileen Tabios



Witnessed in the Convex Mirror: Ravished in the Raw

Sifting the April sunlight for clues
I notice buds late to their blossoming,
a flaw that makes one realize
sunlight offers no clues; it only reveals
what already existed before its random
illumination. Its light may reveal buds
tardy to becoming plums, apricots,
or pears. The revelation may make
you sensitive to the plight of bees—

how chemicals and other human-made pollution are destroying their habitat, causing them, in turn, to destroy more habitat. War always spirals, unless it defeats itself, thus ends. But it's rare for an impulse to want to end itself—that's another truth for which sunlight cannot take credit. To what one sees when light touches down in front of you (lightly like a plane controlled by the most seasoned pilot, or darkly like a sudden and unseasonal storm), only you can decide your response. Don't bother hiring bodyguards—they wait on you to decide your next move before sunset and you are left in the darkness that, like April and sunlight, offers no clues as to how to comprehend how you, once praised by parents and teachers for "brilliant potential," now sift through images of the unripened as if you are among them, yet better than them

Publishing Information

- From the author's *The Ashbery Riff-Offs*—where each poem begins with one or two lines from "Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror" by John Ashbery.

Art Information

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Eileen R. Tabios has released over fifty collections of poetry, fiction, essays, and experimental biographies from publishers in nine countries and in cyberspace. Her 2018 poetry collections include *Murder Death Resurrection* and the bilingual edition (English/Spanish) of *One, Two, Three: Selected Hay(na)ku*.

For more information, visit [Eileen Tabios' website](#) [6].

Witnessed in the Convex Mirror

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