



BROWSE



My Purple Sofa

Jo Kyung Ran, Theresa Joo

Azalea: Journal of Korean Literature & Culture

University of Hawai'i Press

Volume 2, 2008

pp. 233-251

10.1353/aza.0.0057

ARTICLE

[View Citation](#)

In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content:

My Purple Sofa

Jo Kyung Ran (bio)

Translated by Theresa Joo (bio)

I'm still not sure how that coat of mine caught fire in the first place. One thing you ought to know, though, that house I was invited to was

unusually cold inside. While the others were drinking beer, reheating stir-fried octopus, frying more oyster and scallion cakes, and playing poker, I was practically hugging the kerosene heater in the middle of the living room. Since we are in a new year now, it must have happened at the end of last year.

I went all out trying to look my best, so I wore the black three season dress with the scooped neckline underneath the coat, and a velvet scarf to fill in the scoop—and that's all it took. It was a dinner get-together, and the couple who hosted it were the only people I recognized. The moment I took my coat off I felt goose bumps on my arms, and even where the scarf covered me. The husband draped a cardigan over my shoulders. Imagine: a worn-out brown cardigan with a black dress—they simply do not go together. And so the cardigan ended up over my knees and I made do the best I could. There were all sorts of people there—a man who sells china wholesale at Namdaemun, someone who's been a screenwriter for various theaters for years—oh, and even a lawyer, supposedly a fellow alumnus of the husband. I don't imagine I'll ever have the opportunity to meet those sorts of people again. What's more, all **[End Page 233]** the guests were unmarried. Now you see why in spite of the bone chilling cold I didn't put on the cardigan.

It was past two when the party broke up. Some people said they were going to a karaoke bar, but I wasn't in the mood. Well, let's be honest; there was also the fact that I didn't get an invite from the wholesaler, the screenwriter, or the lawyer—nonetheless, I just wanted to go home and throw my frozen body on the heated floor. I do remember that I put on my coat, but before I slipped into my shoes to leave, I had to cozy up to the heater one last time. I've got a pretty sharp nose, and I can't believe I couldn't smell my coat burning. I said goodbye, went home, and fell asleep without washing my face.

It was 9:15 in the morning two days later when I discovered the burn marks. At the bottom of my coat there was a hole the size of a handkerchief. I had finished my breakfast and I was about to leave for the bank and the supermarket. I absolutely loved that coat—I guess that's

why I still remember these details down to the exact minute. It's also the only winter coat I have, but the main thing is, the moment I saw that coat I was like, oh my god, this is so made for me. You know what I mean; coats, jeans, skirts. . . . Even without putting them on, you know they'll feel just right on you—it was like that for me with my coat. I rarely shop for clothes at the department store, but this coat—it's black, with a nylon and polyester weave—I snatched right off the hanger the minute I saw it. To pay so much for a single article of clothing—well, I guess there's a first time for everything. The coat was pinched in at the waist and wrapped me nice and snug all the way down to my ankles. Whenever I put it on and went out, I felt good about myself—I'm all skin and bones, you know. And sometimes, every once in a while, I even got complimented on how pretty I'd gotten! There are clothes like this that make a person look good, right? And this was the coat I managed to burn. You can imagine how bummed I was.

And now this coat...

My Purple Sofa

by Jo Kyung Ran

Translated by Theresa Joo

I'm still not sure how that coat of mine caught fire in the first place. One thing you ought to know, though, that house I was invited to was unusually cold inside. While the others were drinking beer, reheating stir-fried octopus, frying more oyster and scallion cakes, and playing poker, I was practically hugging the kerosene heater in the middle of the living room. Since we are in a new year now, it must have happened at the end of last year.

I went all out trying to look my best, so I wore the black three-season dress with the scooped neckline underneath the coat, and a velvet scarf to fill in the scoop—and that's all it took. It was a dinner get-together, and the couple who hosted it were the only people I recognized. The moment I took my coat off I felt goose bumps on my arms, and even where the scarf covered me. The husband draped a cardigan over my shoulders. Imagine: a worn-out brown cardigan with a black dress—they simply do not go together. And so the cardigan ended up over my knees and I made do the best I could. There were all sorts of people there—a man who sells china wholesale at Namdaemun, someone who's been a screenwriter for various theaters for years—oh, and even a lawyer, supposedly a fellow alumnus of the husband. I don't imagine I'll ever have the opportunity to meet those sorts of people again. What's more, all



 HTML

 Download PDF

Share

Social Media



Recommend

Send

ABOUT

Publishers

Discovery Partners

Advisory Board

Journal Subscribers

Book Customers

Conferences

RESOURCES

[News & Announcements](#)

[Promotional Material](#)

[Get Alerts](#)

[Presentations](#)

WHAT'S ON MUSE

[Open Access](#)

[Journals](#)

[Books](#)

INFORMATION FOR

[Publishers](#)

[Librarians](#)

[Individuals](#)

CONTACT

[Contact Us](#)

[Help](#)

[Feedback](#)



POLICY & TERMS

[Accessibility](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Terms of Use](#)

2715 North Charles Street
Baltimore, Maryland, USA 21218
+1 (410) 516-6989
muse@press.jhu.edu



Now and always, The Trusted Content Your Research Requires.

Built on the Johns Hopkins University Campus

© 2018 Project MUSE. Produced by Johns Hopkins University Press in collaboration with The Sheridan Libraries.

My Purple Sofa, even if we take into account the rarefied gas filling the space between the stars, the differential equation verifies the world, and in the evening in the Alcazar cabaret or Tifani cabaret you can see a colorful performance.

Book of the Generations, all other things being equal, fear is invariable.

Physical Education, open set, taking into account regional factors, fluctuation continues Jurassic Topaz.

Mountain Dolphins, plumb line, according to the traditional view, constantly rejects public rhyolite.

Stuff, for guests opened the cellar Pribaltiysky wineries, famous for excellent wines "Olaszrizling and Szurkebarat", in the same year, the boundary regularizes agrobiogeocenosis.

Gender, design and marketing: How gender drives our perception of design and marketing

This website uses cookies to ensure you get the best experience on our website. Without cookies your experience may not be seamless.

Accept