Immigrant Poems for Two Voices

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| **Freedom Is A Memory**  **By Keira** | | |
| 1902. Chinese female. Zhang Li. |  | 2017. Mexican male. Antonio Lopez. |
| A cramped ship; came to meet my husband, a merchant, in Chinatown. |  | An overcrowded bus; came in search of higher wages and to meet my brother in Firebaugh. |
|  | Rumors, reality. A wave of misery blurs my memories together. |  |
| Angel Island. Twenty-two months; despairing, famished, anguished. |  | Immigrant Visa. Four months; prolonged, stressful, aggravating. |
|  | Questioned about my motives. |  |
| Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. |  | Immigrant Visa laws. Green Card. |
|  | The laws prove America doesn’t want us. Excluded, judged. |  |
|  | Immigration documents say, |  |
| “Legislation provided for the entry of the wives and families of Chinese merchants...” |  | “To apply for an immigrant visa, a foreign citizen must be sponsored by a U.S. citizen relative...” |
|  | No trust; a crime I didn’t commit. |  |
|  | Crossing the border to America. |  |
| Ingenuity, discrimination because I am a Chinese woman. |  | Injustice, paid less than the people who did the same work. |
|  | Honoring my past traditions while creating my future in America. |  |
| Chinatown, with my husband, a merchant's wife. |  | Firebaugh, with my brother, a farmer. |
|  | I will never forget this horror. |  |
|  | “We may have different religions, different languages, different colored skin, but we all belong to one human race.”  ~Kofi Annan |  |

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