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05

Dotorimuk  
Chaebin "Vicky" Yoon




















acorn /'ā,kôrn/ /'er,kɔrn/

noun

The fruit of the oak tree,  
a smooth oval nut in a  
rough cup-shaped base.

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adulthood means liking the food  
you hated as a child  
like asparagus, brussel sprouts,  
and acorn jelly.



Dotorimuk  
Chaebin "Vicky" Yoon

Fall 2021  
Greater Sacramento Area, CA, USA

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05







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in the yard of our new home  
is a peach tree.  
it beared fruit in the summer,  
small as they were,  
but they disappeared  
as suddenly as they appeared.  
i suppose the squirrels got to them first.

they like to yell at me and my dog  
as we wander around the property,  
but i don't pay them much mind.

"they were here first," mom says.  
"it's their home and we just live here."



















when we first moved in, i looked around  
and resigned myself to raking maple leaves in the fall  
i did not account for the oak leaves  
that would blanket the grass and moss  
just as the maples began transitioning to brilliant red

the maples stand bare now  
yet the oak leaves keep falling



mom says they're not the right kind  
but these are the bounties of this home  
so i gather them in my pockets.

here, an ocean away,  
they look different than the ones  
that the land of her childhood provided.  
still the trees feel familiar  
if only vaguely.









i don't remember ever liking dotorimuk  
still i crack open the acorns  
and tediously soak  
and rinse away the bitterness  
to collect the starch  
panned flakes of forest gold.



adulthood means liking the food  
you hated as a child  
like asparagus, brussel sprouts,  
and acorn jelly.









i am told  
to stop wasting time  
"you can just buy it at the store."

Acorns were once a dietary staple wherever oak trees took root. Native Americans used acorn flour for baking; Germans roasted the nuts as a coffee substitute, and Berbers in North Africa pressed the fruit into oil.

These days, besides survivalists and squirrels, Koreans are among the few who'd think to find dinner on the front lawn.

Dotorimuk, or acorn jelly, is a common dish at the Korean table. Its origins are shrouded in a bit of over-the-top romance: wild acorns were gathered in misty mountain forests, intensely labored over using old-fashioned millstones, and provided sustenance for riverside villagers.

By contrast, today's standard recipe is sterile: head to Asian supermarket, buy acorn starch, prepare according to package.

"What the Squirrels Know: Acorns for Dinner"  
Debbie Lee, The New York Times  
October 9, 2010



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someone asked me once  
what persimmons taste like.  
"they taste like fall."  
the autumnal blessing grows alongside apple orchards  
in the hills behind our new home  
but mom insists  
the best persimmons  
come from gyeongsang province.



PASILLA PEPPER  
 SERRANO PEPPER  
 FRESNO PEPPER  
 INDIAN PEPPER  
 BITTER MELON INDIAN  
 JAPANESE PEPPER  
 BRNG QUA  
 OPO (LONG SQUASH)  
 OPO (INDIAN)  
 BITTER MELON  
  
**SIZE**  
 XL  16  
 L  18  
 M  24  
 S  32  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
  
 DISTRIBUTED BY:  
 ENTURE - DBA AS SHASTA  
 18 TERMINAL CT. STALLS 15-32  
 SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, CA. 94053

**NET WT. LBS.**

15 (6.81kg)  35 (15.89kg)  
 20 (9.08kg)  40 (18.18kg)  
 25 (11.34kg)  45 (20.43kg)  
 30 (13.62kg)  \_\_\_\_\_

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 BROCCOLI (CHINESE) (30LBS)  
 CABBAGE (TAIWAN) (40LBS)  
 CHILI (THAI) (GREEN) (30LBS)  
 CHILI (THAI) (RED) (30LBS)  
 CHILI (THAI) (MIX) (30LBS)  
 CUCUMBER (40LBS)  
 DAIKON (40LBS)  
 DAIKON WITH LEAF (40LBS)

EGGPLANT (CHINESE) (30LBS)  
 EGGPLANT (FILIPINO) (30LBS)  
 EGGPLANT (INDIAN) (30LBS)  
 EGGPLANT (THAI) (GREEN) (40LBS)  
 EGGPLANT (THAI) (WHITE) (40LBS)  
 GREEN BEAN (30LBS)  
 JIJUBE (40LBS)  
 KABOCHA (40LBS)  
 KOHLRABI (40LBS)  
 LEMON GRASS (40LBS)  
 LOBAK (CHINESE) (40LBS)  
 LOBAK (GREEN) (40LBS)  
 LOBAK (KOREAN) (40LBS)  
 LONG WUO QUA (40LBS)  
 LONG NAPA CABBAGE (40LBS)  
 LONGBEAN (GREEN) (30LBS)  
 LONGBEAN (WHITE) (30LBS)

MOAP (30LBS)  
 MOQUA (40LBS)  
 OPO (40LBS)  
 PERSIMMON (40LBS)  
 PICKLE (40LBS)  
 SINOVA (30LBS)  
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 SUGAR PEA LEAF (15LBS)  
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PASILLA PEPPER  
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 BITTER MELON INDIAN  
 JAPANESE PEPPER  
 BRNG QUA  
 OPO (LONG SQUASH)  
 OPO (INDIAN)  
 BITTER MELON  
  
**SIZE**  
 XL  16  
 L  18  
 M  24  
 S  32  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
  
 DISTRIBUTED BY:  
 ENTURE - DBA AS SHASTA

**PRODUCT OF U.S. PREMIUM VEGETABLES**

**NET WT. 30 LBS. (13.61 KGS.)**

WO SUN  
 GREEN BEAN  
 JIJUBE  
 LONG BEAN  
 BITTER MELON

**NET WT. 40 LBS. (18.14 KGS.)**

RADISH  
 RADISH WITH LEAF  
 LOBAK  
 DAIKON  
 GREEN LOBAK  
 KOREAN LOBAK  
 KOHLRABI  
 KABOCHA

**NET WT.**  
 LBS. \_\_\_\_\_  
 KGS. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

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she pauses.

"there used to be birds too.  
every year  
during their migration  
they would stop in our town.

probably not anymore."









California grows nearly all the rice used in the country. This rice field outside Woodland, CA went unfarmed this year due to drought. The fields were once burned after harvest, but now they are filled with water to become floodland habitats.



Inundation of the floodplain will occur during the late fall and winter months allowing for continued agricultural use of the property during the growing season. The area may be pre-flooded and maintained after a natural Fremont Weir overtopping event. The Project will mimic natural, shallow, long duration flood patterns and restore the ecological process that drives healthy and productive aquatic ecosystems.

The Project creates critical floodplain rearing habitat for all runs of Salmon as well as producing annual export of food to the Delta, even in critically dry years, benefiting the Smelt populations in the Sacramento River and Delta ecosystems.

Migratory birds along the Pacific Flyway will benefit from winter water practices that generate varied depths of floodplain habitat at key times for multiple species of waterfowl, shorebirds, and wading birds.

Nigiri 2.0  
[thenigiriproject.com](http://thenigiriproject.com)











did they know  
those birds  
as they left  
that it would be the last time?

back then  
communication was scarce  
every minute paid for by prepaid card  
my grandmother calls from korea  
"come say hi."  
i hid in my room

she is as foreign  
as my mother tongue.











for better  
or for worse  
i share my day  
and near instantaneously  
an ocean away  
my cousin sees





In a way, diving back into foraging was the way that I fell back in love with food. It was not on purpose... And it just brought me this joy and this connection to place that I didn't have at that point in time. So much so that I went out and I sought out more information, and I got more bold with my cooking and started being willing to put flour and bread into my food again. And I was willing to make sweet things again. There's something soul-nourishing about caring about how you're nourishing your body.

"How Foraging Restored My Relationship with Food"  
Alexis Nikole Nelson, TED Radio Hour  
September 3, 2021







grandmother is  
halmoni



acorn jelly is  
dotorimuk















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To my mother  
whose love language is food.  
To Yoona and Andrew,  
my relentless cheerleaders.  
To Alexis Nikole Nelson,  
@blackforager,  
who having never meet me  
teaches me that food  
connects me to land and self  
and family.









Dotorimuk means acorn jelly, a classic Korean dish. I never liked it growing up, yet still I grabbed some acorns off the grass of my backyard. This is the story of how acorns took me on a journey to discover culinary and cultural roots.