

KIM GOLDBERG

Pristine

But this one is my favourite: You are really Pao P'u Tzu, the legendary Master Who Preserves His Pristine Simplicity. And you have amnesia. (One forgets a lot in 1,700 years. Just last week I forgot the scissors I went out to buy to make this book. Even had them in my hand before I saw the garden whirlygigs. Had to drive back to Dollarama but it was closed. Creativity postponed due to globalization and aging.) This explains a great deal—your stewpot, my braising, these fleshy tracts of memory falling from the bone, confusion vaporized, taking flight as a lungful of ruby-crowned kinglets rushing past teeth and tongue, collapsing my chest so I can populate it anew with species of my choosing. Is it soup yet? Is this the elixir? Is it? (Our relationship was never what it seemed.) *Having features seek the featureless.* You printed it on your club T-shirts so we wouldn't forget. But knowledge is more than neural networks alight with peptides. All of which means that in the end it will fall to me to hide your body (leaving perhaps your kungfu shoes and broadsword in some not-too-hard-to-discover location, maybe under the rhododendrons by the pavilion) to preserve your status as a corpse-free Immortal.

