

UNRAVELING PRECARITY AND RECLAIMED IDENTITY THROUGH LANGUAGE IN GINA CHUNG'S WOMEN- CENTERED NARRATIVES

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ABSTRACT

This study explores how precarity and reclaimed identity are constructed through language in three short stories “Green Frog,” “After Party,” and “Rabbit Heart” from *Green Frog Stories* by Gina Chung. Positioning women-centered narratives as a critical space for articulating female experience, the study adopts a female reader’s perspective to examine how Asian American women negotiate emotional, bodily, and domestic vulnerabilities within diasporic contexts. Grounded in Judith Butler’s concepts of precarity and agency and informed by feminist literary criticism and Asian American literary studies, the research employs qualitative textual analysis focusing on narrative voice, figurative language, and affective expression. The findings reveal that each story represents precarity through distinct yet interconnected linguistic strategies: emotional restraint and silence in “Green Frog,” gendered emotional labor in “After Party,” and embodied fear and desire in “Rabbit Heart.” Despite persistent vulnerability, the female protagonists demonstrate agency through reflective narration, subtle resistance, and moments of linguistic self-preservation that enable identity reclamation. Overall, the study argues that vulnerability is not portrayed as weakness but as a generative condition through which women articulate resilience and reconstruct identity through language.

Keywords: *Precarity, Agency, Feminist Literary Criticism, Asian American Literature, Language.*

1. INTRODUCTION

When it comes to women’s lives, both personal and social, there are always compelling stories, especially when they enter the realm of fiction. This is not only because of the diversity of women’s experiences, but also because fiction serves as a medium through which women can create change, from the personal to the broader social level. Fiction becomes a space where female writers and readers can interact and understand one another’s experiences (Pareek & Choudhary, 2024; Nurgiyantoro, 2019; Atmojo, 2020). These two sides meet through the lives of female characters who become the center of the story, building a deep emotional connection. After all, women often possess a strong sense of empathy, one woman’s

experience can easily resonate with many others (Latha et al., 2024; Tripathi et al., 2024). Therefore, fiction becomes one of the most powerful spaces for women to reflect on themselves, both as writers and as readers.

Grounded in the perspective above, researchers adopting the perspective of a female reader, seeks to understand women’s experiences through the works of the Korean-American writer Gina Chung. Chung’s collection (Chung, 2024) *Green Frog Stories* draws attention as it reflects the lives of immigrant families, particularly Korean Americans. The experiences of immigrant writers in recent decades have become a significant subject of literary study, reflecting an increasingly globalized life that transcends personal and cultural

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boundaries. Stories about immigrant families, therefore, remain a rich and engaging field of exploration (Monshcheuer, 2023; Atterberry, 2022; Li et al., 2025). By reading women's fiction through a feminist and post-migration lens, this study aims to understand how women navigate precarity and agency in contemporary immigrant narratives.

Three stories were selected for analysis *Green Frog*, *After Party*, and *Rabbit Heart*. These stories were chosen because they each present a female protagonist who faces different forms of struggle, conflict, and resistance. Such narrative variety provides a rich foundation for examining women's experiences more deeply and allows a nuanced exploration of how female characters navigate their challenges. Building on this narrative diversity, the study employs a set of theoretical tools to better understand the complexities within each story.

The theoretical framework used in this study is primarily Judith Butler's concepts of *precarity* and *agency* (Butler, 2022; Chew & Asl, 2024), which function as the main analytical tools for understanding the conditions faced by the characters. These concepts are further supported by feminist theories from several scholars to strengthen the reading of the texts (Fadilah et al., 2023; Jaya et al., 2025; Kaforina et al., 2023). Additionally, because these stories are written by a Korean-American author, references to immigrant and diaspora literature are included to enrich the contextual understanding of the narratives (Bennet & Royle, 2023; Soe, 2024; Lewis, 2019).

Considering the author's background is crucial in feminist literary analysis, as it offers insight into how a work should be interpreted and situated. Gina Chung is an American writer of Korean descent whose identity significantly shapes the themes she explores. Her writing often reflects the experiences of diasporic identity,

intergenerational tension, and the emotional interiority of Asian-American women. Chung's personal background, which includes growing up between cultures, her interest in animals and ecology, and her commitment to representing Asian-American voices, deeply influences her storytelling style and the psychological landscapes of her characters.

From a theoretical standpoint, *Green Frog Stories* can be situated within Asian American literature, given that its author, Gina Chung, is an American writer of Korean descent. Reading her work therefore requires an understanding of the broader framework of Asian American literary studies, a field that emerged within academia as a form of resistance to dominant cultural narratives. As Lee argues, Asian American literature has historically developed as a counter-discourse against Orientalist representations, positioning itself as both a creative expressive tradition and a politically engaged one (Lee, 2010).

This dual function is evident in Chung's stories, which weave together elements of Korean cultural memory and American lived experience. Such a reading becomes even more nuanced when approached through a feminist lens. Understanding Chung simultaneously as a female writer and an Asian American author opens up a richer perspective on literature as a space of both creative expression and political identity.

Feminist literary criticism has long emphasized the importance of women's narratives as a means of reclaiming subjectivity and articulating experiences historically silenced within patriarchal literary traditions (Kroeber, 2018; Buell, 2019). Scholars such as Barry and Plain argue that women's writing functions not only as artistic expression but also as a political intervention that makes visible the emotional, bodily, and domestic realities of women's lives. Narratives written by

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women and centered on female protagonists often explore themes of vulnerability, intimacy, selfhood, and resistance, demonstrating how personal experience is shaped by larger structures of gender and power (Listyani, 2019; Ayu et al., 2023; Roberts et al., 2023). In this context, women's storytelling becomes a critical site for examining how female characters negotiate pressures imposed by family, culture, and society, while simultaneously forging space for their own forms of autonomy (Greene & Kahn, 2020; Ff, 2020; Indah, 2024).

The read alongside feminist criticism, Asian American literature such as Chung's becomes an especially rich field for exploring how gendered experiences intersect with racialized and diasporic forms of vulnerability. While feminist theory illuminates the emotional and domestic complexities faced by women, it is Judith Butler's concepts of *precarity* and *agency* that provide a deeper analytical framework for understanding how these vulnerabilities are socially produced and politically distributed. Butler's work allows us to see that the struggles depicted in Chung's stories whether involving the body, family relationships, or emotional intimacy are not merely personal difficulties but manifestations of broader structural conditions that shape women's lives. At the same time, Butler emphasizes that within these conditions of precarity, individuals also enact agency through negotiation, resistance, and the creation of personal spaces of safety. This theoretical shift provides a seamless bridge into a more focused analysis of how Chung's female characters embody both precarity and agency within the specific context of Asian-American diasporic womanhood.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research design with a textual analysis approach to examine the representation of

precarity and agency in three short stories by Gina Chung (Chung, 2024): "*Green Frog*," "*Rabbit Heart*," and "*After Party*." A qualitative approach is chosen because it enables the researcher to engage with the depth of meaning, emotional complexity, and the psychological and social dynamics experienced by female characters in the literary texts (Bennet & Royle, 2023; Neuman, 2019; Tisdell et al., 2025). Rather than quantifying data, the study focuses on generating rich interpretations of women's experiences as depicted through narrative structures, metaphors, and the author's broader storytelling strategies (Ilmonen, 2020).

As its primary analytical framework, this research uses Judith Butler's concepts of *precarity* and *agency*. Precarity is understood as a condition of vulnerability that is produced through social, cultural, and relational structures, while agency is viewed not as absolute freedom but as the capacity to negotiate, respond, and construct spaces of safety within precarious circumstances. Integrating Butler's theory with feminist criticism allows the researcher to illuminate how emotional fragility, bodily pressures, and domestic insecurity are experienced particularly by women in Asian American diasporic contexts, as well as how they respond to these conditions through various forms of resistance (Rys & Philipsen, 2021; Jaya et al., 2025; Veto Mortini et al., 2023).

The primary data for this study consist of the three short stories from Gina Chung's *Green Frog Stories* collection: *Green Frog Story*, *After Party* and *Rabbit Heart*. Secondary data include books, journal articles, and theoretical works on feminist literary criticism, Asian American literature, diaspora studies, and Judith Butler's writings on precarity and agency. Data collection is conducted through intensive close reading to identify quotations, dialogues, narrative patterns, metaphors, and other representational elements relevant to the study's focus on women's experiences.

Data analysis is carried out in three main stages (Mauliddiyah, 2021; Herdayati

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& Syahrial, 2019; Susanto et al., 2023). First, a close reading process is used to identify segments of the text that depict the characters' emotions, bodies, and domestic dynamics. Second, the data are categorized using a feminist literary framework, specifically into emotional representation, bodily representation, and domestic/familial representation. Third, theoretical interpretation is conducted by linking these findings to Butler's concepts of precarity and agency, enabling the researcher to reveal how women experience vulnerability and what forms of resistance, negotiation, or creation of safe spaces emerge in response.

To ensure the validity of the study, theoretical triangulation is employed by comparing the analytical results with various feminist perspectives and diaspora theories. Additionally, the researcher uses cross-textual comparison to assess the consistency of themes related to precarity and agency across the three stories. Analytical reliability is maintained through the researcher's reflective practice as a female reader, allowing interpretations to be grounded not only in personal insight but also in established academic frameworks. These steps ensure that the analysis is credible, coherent, and contributes meaningfully to literary scholarship.

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents a close textual analysis of the three selected stories from Gina Chung's *Green Frog Stories* collection: "Green Frog," "After Party," and "Rabbit Heart." Each analysis examines how the stories portray forms of precarity experienced by female characters such as emotional, domestic, and bodily; while also highlighting how these women enact agency within their socio-cultural and relational constraints. The analysis draws upon feminist literary criticism and Judith Butler's theoretical framework to illuminate how precarity is produced and negotiated in Asian American contexts.

1. Analysis of "Green Frog"

Emotional Precarity

In "*Green Frog*," emotional precarity emerges through the fragile, distant, and unresolved bond between the narrator and her mother. The narrative does not portray emotional pain through outbursts or confrontation, but through silence, guilt, and the inability to reach one another until it is too late. From the beginning, the protagonist is marked by a deep sense of inadequacy; she grows up believing she is a disappointment, a belief reinforced by years of being compared to her sister. The line "*I knew I had never belonged there... thinking about how I would tell my mother that I'd fucked up again*" (Chung, 2024) reveals how fear and self-doubt have shaped her emotional landscape long before her mother's death.

Her memories of childhood capture a rare moment of closeness: when she could barely breathe, her mother would hold her face and say, "*You're here... and I'm here.*" (Chung, 2024). Yet this physical tenderness never developed into emotional intimacy as she grew older. During her mother's final days in the hospital, she clings to connection through drawing, obsessively sketching her mother's hands as if trying to keep her from slipping away. In a moment of desperation, she begs, "*I'm sorry I messed up... I won't let you down,*" (Chung, 2024) but her mother responds simply with "*Green frog.*" That single phrase embodies years of miscommunication: affection wrapped in disappointment, love expressed only through reproach.

Even after her mother's death, emotional precarity persists within the family. On the anniversary of Umma's passing, the narrator notices her father cannot bring himself to say the words "*your mother,*" and she digs her nails into her palms. Their silence about grief functions like a barrier they cannot break. Later, when her sister gently urges her to move forward with her life, she responds with "*The only thing I'm good at is disappointing people,*" (Chung, 2024) exposing how deeply she has internalized failure and unworthiness, an inheritance of emotional wounds rather than genetics.

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Yet emotional precarity is also present in moments when tenderness finally appears, but feels unfamiliar. When Anne embraces her a family unused to hugs the narrator lets herself be held, trying to focus on the rare comfort of connection rather than the insecurity it stirs inside her. Later, during dinner with her family and coworkers, a brief blackout causes her breath to shorten and panic to flare, but when the lights return and everyone laughs, she feels something *unclench* inside her, as if she is finally allowing herself to belong.

Ultimately, emotional precarity in “*Green Frog*” is not simply sadness. It is a state of constantly teetering between collapse and healing, shaped by intergenerational trauma, cultural expectations, and love that never found its language. By the end, when the narrator tells herself, “*I am here... and maybe it’s time I did something about it,*” (Chung, 2024) it marks a quiet but powerful turning point: she begins to step out of the shadow of inherited emotional pain, seeing her own presence and agency for the first time.

Domestic Precarity

Domestic precarity in “*Green Frog*” emerges through the narrator’s entanglement with household duty, economic dependence, and inherited expectations that restrict her autonomy. From the beginning of the story, her sister reinforces societal pressure by telling her that “*twenty-five is too old to be living at home with our father,*” (Chung, 2024) framing the home not as a place of comfort but as evidence of failure. The narrator remains in the house not out of choice but because she feels obligated to support her father and the family restaurant, insisting, “*I have to be here to help Appa out with the restaurant.*” (Chung, 2024). This sense of duty positions her as both caregiver and stand-in for her late mother, binding her to the domestic sphere and preventing the pursuit of independence or self-development.

The story further reveals that this obligation is entangled with insecurity rather than genuine domestic comfort. Anne confronts her by saying, “*I think the only*

reason you’re here is because you’re scared to go anywhere else,” (Chung, 2024) highlighting that the home is not a safe refuge but a psychological cage. External voices reinforce this burden; customers from the church tell her, “*What would your father do without you?*” (Chung, 2024) implying that her worth is measured by her sacrifice to the household rather than her personal aspirations. The pressure intensifies when Mrs. Pak comments, “*You’re a good girl to help him out. But shouldn’t you be working now, somewhere in the city, like your sister?*” (Chung, 2024) suggesting that fulfilling domestic responsibilities comes at the cost of her economic future. Domestic life becomes a double bind: she is judged if she stays, yet guilt-ridden if she leaves.

Unequal distribution of domestic labor further deepens her instability within the family. After her father left to pursue missionary work, the mother took over the restaurant and assigned the narrator kitchen responsibilities, while “*Anne was never expected to work at the restaurant, because she was too busy with orchestra or debate team.*” (Chung, 2024). This disparity communicates an emotional hierarchy within the home: Anne is the daughter groomed for success, while the narrator becomes the laboring body meant to sustain the household. The situation worsens when a mistake at the restaurant leads to her mother’s reproach: “*I should have known better than to ask you to help,*” (Chung, 2024) followed by the command that she “*stay at home from now on.*” (Chung, 2024) The domestic space becomes simultaneously a site of dependence and rejection she is needed, yet undervalued.

The psychological effect of this domestic burden becomes clear when the narrator internalizes failure, confessing, “*I’m not like you, okay? The only thing I’m good at is disappointing people.*” (Chung, 2024) The home becomes a structure that shapes her self-perception, instilling inadequacy rather than belonging. Domestic precarity in the story, therefore, is not rooted in physical danger but in the emotional, financial, and social instability produced by family obligations, uneven

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labor expectations, and the pressure to fill the maternal void. Chung illustrates how the home, culturally idealized as a place of nurturance, operates instead as a site of confinement that delays adulthood, suppresses dream fulfillment, and perpetuates inherited patterns of sacrifice.

Agency: Quiet Resistance and Self-Reclamation

Although the narrator in “*Green Frog*” lives under emotional distance and domestic pressure, her agency emerges not in loud rebellion but in subtle, incremental acts of self-recognition. The first shift occurs when the narrator begins to re-examine the internal narrative that has governed her life, particularly the belief that she is a disappointment. When Anne tells her, “*The only person you need to worry about disappointing is yourself,*” (Chung, 2024) the narrator does not immediately transform, but she allows the words to linger. This moment marks the beginning of agency: the willingness to imagine a life outside the role she has inherited.

Her agency further unfolds in how she processes her grief. Emotional precarity has taught her to equate love with silence and sacrifice, but the shared dinner scene becomes a turning point. For the first time, she experiences domestic space not as burden but as connection. Surrounded by her father, Anne, Thomas, and Mrs. Pak, people who have also endured loss, she feels something inside her “unclench.” This shift is subtle, but powerful: she learns that nurture can exist beyond the mother who once anchored her. Agency takes shape through the recognition that she is allowed to receive rather than only give.

The most meaningful expression of agency, however, appears in her final internal monologue. Reflecting on her mother’s repeated claim that she “*always needed to do things the hard way,*” the narrator chooses to reinterpret that identity. Rather than seeing herself as a failure, she begins to see difficulty as part of her resilience. In the final lines, she considers concrete steps toward reclaiming her life,

calling Nadia about the apartment, starting to draw again, enrolling in an art class. None of these actions happen on the page; what happens is something more foundational: she allows possibility back into her life. Agency, in this moment, is the choice to imagine a future that belongs to her.

The repeated affirmation “*I am here*” serves as a declaration of agency within vulnerability. It does not reject her emotional or domestic precarity, but coexists with it. She is still grieving, still unsure of her talent, still tied to her family, but she begins to believe she deserves a life beyond these conditions. In Butler’s framework, agency is not absolute autonomy; it is the capacity to negotiate precarity rather than be defined by it. The narrator’s agency is therefore not measured by escape from home but by her quiet decision to stop disappearing within it.

In this story, Chung shows that agency for immigrant women is not expressed as dramatic defiance. Instead, it grows in small but radical shifts in self-perception: the moment one believes they are worthy of more. For the narrator, agency begins in a whisper rather than a shout, but that whisper is enough to change the direction of her life.

2. Analysis of “After Party”***Emotional Precarity***

In “*After the Party,*” emotional precarity is embodied through Mia’s persistent sense of not belonging, not in her marriage, not in the academic community surrounding her husband, and not even in her own family. She is a Korean-American woman living in a predominantly white, upper-middle-class space, where she constantly questions her worth and legitimacy. This insecurity becomes clearest whenever she compares herself to Peter and the world he represents:

“Three years into her marriage, she still couldn’t imagine anyone who looked like her ever living there.” (Chung, 2024)

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Although Mia has entered Peter's world physically, she does not feel entitled to it emotionally. Her anxiety grows stronger when she interacts with her family; her mother depends on her for emotional survival, yet Mia is never enough to truly satisfy her. She becomes the designated emotional buffer between her parents:

"She was always apologizing to her mother for her father's mistakes." (Chung, 2024)

Here, Mia internalizes responsibility for problems she did not create. That emotional inheritance, tied to intergenerational trauma and gendered duty, traps her in a cycle of guilt and self-blame. Emotional precarity in the story is therefore not simply a feeling; it is a structure, shaped by expectations of daughterhood, wifehood, and assimilation.

Domestic Precarity

Although Mia's life appears stable from the outside, her domestic sphere reveals a deeper sense of insecurity. Her home does not serve as a safe or supportive space; instead, it reinforces the gendered burden of care and the pressure to maintain her husband's reputation. After the party, Peter immediately withdraws while Mia continues working:

"Peter finished rinsing the plate he had been washing and left the kitchen, leaving the rest of the unwashed cups and plates for her to do." (Chung, 2024)

This quote reflects the unequal distribution of domestic labor, care work is silently expected of Mia. Domestic precarity appears again when Peter expects her to tolerate inappropriate behavior from his colleague for the sake of his career:

"I hope you said yes... You know he's on my tenure review committee next year." (Chung, 2024)

Peter prioritizes professional advancement over Mia's dignity, implying that her body and presence can be deployed strategically to serve male interests. In these moments, home becomes a site where power

dynamics and patriarchal expectations are reproduced rather than relieved. Marriage does not protect Mia; instead, it exposes her to new forms of vulnerability.

Agency: Quiet Resistance and the Creation of a Private Self

Despite emotional and domestic constraints, Mia shows agency, not through confrontation, but through subtle and intimate gestures of self-preservation. Her cigarettes, hidden from Peter, are symbolic rather than merely habitual:

"It was nice to keep some things for herself, to have a small secret." (Chung, 2024)

Her agency resides in carving out private territories where she is not monitored, evaluated, or required to perform. Another key moment of agency appears when she begins to imagine a future on her own terms, a life shaped around her decisions, not her husband's expectations:

"She would apply for jobs outside of the college She would finish her thesis... She would figure out what exactly she wanted to do with the degree later." (Chung, 2024)

These intentions may not yet lead to direct action, but they mark a psychological shift: Mia starts to prioritize her own desires. The final scene reinforces her growing awareness that life extends beyond the domestic narrative she has tried so hard to sustain:

"She remembered that the night held far more than what she could see with her eyes alone." (Chung, 2024)

This recognition represents her awakening, a movement toward self-recognition and inner spaciousness. Mia does not escape her life, but she begins to reclaim it internally. Her agency is quiet, but transformative.

3. Analysis of "Rabbit Heart"***Emotional Precarity***

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In “*Rabbit Heart*,” emotional precarity forms the core of the narrator’s childhood. From the opening lines, she defines herself through fear, they are fear of teachers, noise, public speaking, and even God. The girl occupies the world as if she is always too much or not enough, already aware that she does not meet the standards expected of her. This fragility turns into self-loathing when she observes her classmates and feels profoundly disconnected from them, excluded by both body and personality.

The sudden arrival of her grandmother temporarily interrupts this emotional precarity. For the first time in her life, the narrator feels not only seen but celebrated, beautiful, cherished, and worthy of affection. The summer in Seoul becomes a sanctuary of unconditional love, where her grandmother combs her hair, makes her dresses fit her body instead of forcing her body to fit the dresses, and comforts her without judgment. This brief experience of emotional safety is precious precisely because it is so rare.

However, the emotional precarity returns in intensified form after the narrator returns to America. The grandmother’s voice fades into static on the phone, her Korean language disappears, and childhood tenderness dissolves into anger. Fear crystallizes into rage, and she fights other girls at school, turning vulnerability inward and outward. The moment her grandmother dies, after that surreal imaginary escape from the hospital, the narrator is thrust again into a world where loss, loneliness, and responsibility weigh heavily. The last words she hears, “*Take care of your mother*,” become the emotional duty she must shoulder alone, reinforcing that love is complicated by obligation.

Bodily Precarity

Throughout the story, the narrator’s body appears as a source of insecurity and shame, and later as a conduit for memory and empowerment. As a child, she is mocked for being overweight and clumsy; her glasses, her overalls, and her physical spills become symbols of inadequacy. Her body is not neutral, it is interpreted by others, policed, and used to justify exclusion.

Her grandmother’s gaze reverses this narrative. Instead of seeing excess weight or physical flaws, she sees beauty, strength, and lineage, “*an American nose*” to be proud of. In Seoul, the narrator’s body is adorned, celebrated, and allowed to exist without shrinking. The dresses are adjusted to her body, not the other way around, and for the first time she experiences bodily acceptance.

But bodily precarity returns as she grows older: she becomes angrier, rougher, and violent, and her glasses break during fights, symbolizing a body in conflict with the world rather than at peace. At the hospital, bodily imagery becomes tender again holding the grandmother’s hand, helping her put on shoes, smelling her one last time. The body becomes both the site of grief and the vehicle of love.

Thus, bodily precarity in the story reflects a lifelong tension: the narrator’s body is alternately mocked, cherished, punished, and remembered, carrying both trauma and connection across generations.

Agency: Courage Through Fear and the Legacy of the “Rabbit Heart”

While fear dominates her childhood, the narrator gradually transforms fear into courage. It’s the core symbolism of the *rabbit heart*. Her grandmother’s stories, timid rabbits outsmarting tigers and traveling to underwater kingdoms, teach her that bravery is not the absence of fear, but movement despite fear. This belief subtly reshapes the narrator’s identity: even as she grows more fearful, she also becomes more capable of defending herself and confronting external threats.

The most powerful depiction of agency emerges during the grandmother’s imagined escape from the hospital. The narrator, a frightened girl, suddenly acts boldly: sneaking out the window, helping her grandmother run barefoot through streets, picking flowers for strangers, buying ice cream in the middle of the night. Whether the escape actually happened or was a final act of the imagination does not matter; symbolically, it is the child’s ultimate rebellion against helplessness.

The agency continues even in grief. When the grandmother tells her to “*take care of your mother*,” (Chung, 2024) she receives a responsibility that is too large for

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her age, yet she accepts it. Though she walks back into the hospital alone, she does so carry wildflowers, the last shared memory of love and defiance. She completes the journey without collapsing.

Thus, agency in “*Rabbit Heart*” is quiet but powerful: it is the ability to love fiercely, to protect, to remember, and to continue living with fear rather than surrendering to it. The rabbit is not weak; it is brave precisely because it trembles.

4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that Gina Chung’s short stories portray precarity and agency as interconnected conditions shaping Asian American women’s emotional, bodily, and domestic lives. Through “*Green Frog*,” “*After Party*,” and “*Rabbit Heart*,” vulnerability emerges from generational trauma, relational instability, and embodied fear, while agency is expressed through subtle acts of reflection, self-preservation, and the reassertion of personal boundaries. Chung’s narratives affirm that vulnerability is not antithetical to strength but a meaningful site for identity negotiation and resilience.

The implications of this study contribute to feminist literary criticism and Asian American literary studies by highlighting how women’s everyday experiences of fragility function as forms of quiet resistance within diasporic contexts. Pedagogically, these findings may also inform literature teaching by encouraging nuanced readings of agency beyond overt rebellion, particularly in women-centered texts.

Future research may extend this analysis by examining other works by Chung or comparing her representations of precarity with those of other Asian American women writers. Further studies could also explore reader-response perspectives or interdisciplinary approaches linking literary precarity with sociological or psychological frameworks.

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