

These Unfolding Lessons
Elena Stevens

Work harder, be better.
Rise up, rise above
My neighbor who won't acknowledge I exist
Though our lives intertwine,
in a constant twist.
Rise up, rise above
A morning jogger who assumes I don't speak her tongue
Judging me quick,
Under "foreign," I'm hung.
Rise up, rise above
The hatred facing our community
Old as this country,
Has us searching for unity.
Work harder, be better but
Put your head down
Don't burden others with your trouble,
Bear the load, almost drown
In the hate, from the pain
Attacks on all sides
Bear the load, bear the blame
Hide from the spotlight.
They say, "Don't stir the pot"
Filled with my Asian background
Slurped up by those quick to love the culture
But hate the people to which it's bound.
We're taught to hide our wounds because they've had it worse
Though their cut is throbbing, our cut still hurts.
Addressing the pain guides us to a better tomorrow
Embracing our hurt, not swimming in sorrow.
Work harder, be better and
Step up to the plate
Caring for each other,
uniting love against hate.
Hate is a virus hard to contain,
So quick and contagious
Looking for blame.
Reflecting on lessons learned as they continue to unfold,
Every person has a story
Every story should be told.
Only when each experience is shared do we begin to understand
The story of a country projecting its hurt
On a minority in its land.
Breaking down barriers, leaping over walls
Reaching out across races, genders, to any and all

Together we stand
Finding hope in the stars
Healing our wounds
Before they become scars.