

a more perfect union (misplaced accent)

wē he *people* o hē un i e a
ī o e ō o m a m o e p e e *union*
e a l i h u i e i n u e o m e i a n u i l i
p o i e o h e o m m o n e e n e p o m o e
h e e n e a l w e l a e a n e u e h e l e i n
o **lie** o o u e l e a n o u p o e i o
o a i n a n e a l i h i o n i u i o n o h e
u n i e a e o a m e i a

to sift grave scrape
divide the line between
lands say supreme
stingy prolonged sound
or thing chanting drawn
out wail of superior air
answer: resonance
remain endure survive
exist journey
native trees northeast wind
contiguous adjoining
next approaching

act of math

for haunani-kay trask

you learn *discovery*
and *resolution*
before you learn
venereal safe sex
is not a footnote
in the scripture

& the delineations of ~~mainland~~ states

& to sing his praises, most high:
god is good
god is bountiful
god is not earth(ly possessions)
god is not water — loose, like your women

find ola hou in JESUS
here is your free condom (1)
pocket KJV bible (1)

and your acres (3) for 10% of you of the one-third saved
from sailor's gifts the everlasting gift saved by the precious
blood
of JESUS, amene!

may *the lord's will* be done
in the islands as it is
on the continent

you learn percentages: *blood quantum*,
the privatization of rain, how to parcel
ahupua'a like gutting a fish:

suck your lipskin raw
on the sweet green stalk harvested by settlers
on the iwi
of your ancestors

the great māhele divides more than the land

today, god is an algorithm
you know your arithmetic

très passing

*

he asks you what you're looking for
as you squint, pretend intent, searching
for something that doesn't exist
between the jersey sheets still sticky
from the excessive plastic packaging
and him, your honeyed spoon

you tell him without pause, and you swear
without wanting to go deep or at least
philosophical at 4 in the morning:

i'm looking for a reason

you laugh together. he calls you
his poet

pulls you
back
into the
folds of
he — you
want
to, you
want
him, but
his ring
stings your
cheek

& you can't
fall back
asleep, not for
just
five
minutes
more

*

*

a heavy bass line. predictable, strong. the heart beat. a softness, surprising, mounts: mournful strings. violin or slow plucking of harp.

the notes, a series
of snapshots, sweet
repetitive goodbyes

song ends

on the color *blush*

sounds

the current parting

the gauzy rose curtains where

your other self floats before
tiptoeing back upstairs

your flushed, freshly

fucked cheeks, a color that rings in your ears for days on

end

the rare dusk that opens

to you from a shared backyard, the spectrum of sense

available, waiting

or a more accurate refrain,

the chilled wine you have yet

to permit yourselves to sip

* *in the southern hemisphere, constellations are reversed*

*

*

aloha
or how
many ways
you have learned
to say goodbye: you knew
you would leave the continent
no one could find on a map
without a note because you could not
face why you were no better than
the french miners raping
the highlands with their hungry
machines scarring sacred stone
you too dishonored the body
rubbing leaves violently between
forefinger & thumb to capture
the fragrance of eucalyptus
using *veloma & salamo*
& bags of undocumented cloves
as cheap party tricks even now
crossing austra-indo-pacific seas
in dreams returning to find
fluency without consent

.....

*_*_*_*

om shala mala beads
seven white women
three rows of seats &
one precarious parallel
parking spot [cue clapping]

zen den goddess lair but
not a harem *how offensive*
cumin ghee chia seeds
gut health nepalese
prayer flag flapping anti-

inflammatory remedy
recipe exchange man-
dala womb crystalline
sound bath meditating
singing bowls burning

greenhouse gases *oh GOD-*
DESS the gardener using
roundup on the dairy
gluten substance free
range certified organic

divine! abundance!
blessings! sing lawyer
doctor breadwinner real
estate agent analyst
activist vice president

have you heard of
resistant starch, not
a diet, a *lifestyle change*
but i'm so full i can't
eat another bite

i'm trying to gain
weight actually, you
first, i insist, i don't
eat in the morning
i don't eat

at night, let's go on

a hike, do yoga to
deserve our meals
doesn't that feel
great? eat MORE

your ethnic-chic accent
pillows from New Renaissance
your hired acupuncturist slash
astrologist your fucking winter
beach house in hawai'i

more please & blessings

ten-cent flower

in bangkok, i use the back of my hand
to extract a sooty, sticky drip from my nose

— the smell of home: *puakenikeni*.
here, the fragile white flowers grace

shrines the size of birdhouses, next to
bowls of rice & deferential fruit flies &

icy rust-stained bottles of orange fanta.
at home, the sap sticks to children's fingers,

fruit plucked too young from low-hanging
branches, gathered in plastic foodland bags

& strung into congratulatory strands: birthdays,
graduations, just-cuz-aloha-fridays... sweet

stems assaulting with their smell lingering long
after the life of the party. i've sung my lineage

for those confused about my *exact* origins
needing to *place* and *order* and *root* me

before *enjoying* me, carefully curated cut of
artisanal meat, while our families make house

on the ninth island, at the edges of deserts,
flashing neon & slot machines: the only place

we can live like the kings and queens
of a monarchy that was never ours.

my house is a museum of pretty
exotic things, lei placed delicately

on bare burnt shoulders, obligatory
kiss on cheek, a taste of paradise

that has never belonged to me, either.

her inheritance

*I wish my poems could save us from
our parents' childhoods*
— Sara Borjas

Sooner or later history catches up.
— Erica Hunt

one-half of one-third of the axis of evil
a carcinogenic preference, acquired taste
for plastic, screaming a way thru
— the color blue, broken coral, a
collection of smooth rocks to lay
on an unmarked grave.

soft nails that tear at the quick,
hurried step across busy streets
to an indifferent greeting: no one
knows how to pronounce your
name

fascination with flame
& glass & sand & tail &
chasing flight, pointer
finger fixed toward the sky
— a thrice-history of fleeing
one-fourth refinanced
one-fourth reverse mortgaged
one-fourth rented w/ roommate
three-fourths on the spectrum of unemployed
— bill unpaid
under sheafs of red-marked paper, birthed
unto balance owed, decrepit credit score
before even learning to count: ichi, ekahi, ...

what to say when a stranger offers candy?
i say salamat po, mama