

## TIME ZONES

Morning plain peels the sky of clouds open  
    **Skin like a dead chicken after the bones**  
blue save a thin white line that cuts over  
    **are broken, the wings limp, bald neck**  
cars the conveyor belt free of speed limits,  
    **twisted, kneecaps bruised, arms swollen. He's**  
blowing hair onto blue eyes, top down, the brother  
    **skinnier, the tattoo etched on his thighs**  
is surfing an ice cream of sea salt and mint  
    **still bright, the yellows reds blues of honor**  
waves, the sister pours over a solid sand house  
    **ribbons engraved, the sign of the cross--**  
in it a mother and a child pray there's enough  
    **in the head, in the gut, close range**  
stories to bring the clouds back, a whole covering  
    **a bullet hole on each side of the chest**

## LOVE POEM

Cold your feet are every day cold  
kahit lagi mong sinasabi na mainit

Not naked but to let me wear my clothes, my secrets  
hindi ko ramdam na maganda o pangit ako

The plates broken from anger, the shouts neighbors eat up  
kawawa naman ang anak natin na natuto na lang hindi pansinin

Your dog you'd kill over, his warmth before hiding to die  
pero ang mga pusa na laging naiwan

I am done in fragments  
hindi na tayo makapagkwentuhan

To last this long because we let each other not want  
ni hindi na tayo masaya pero di natin yun sasabihin

To speak or touch or stay in one house  
kaya mabuti na rin siguro ang magkahiwalay

But when I hurt myself, you let me cut deeper  
pero tutulungan mo akong linisin ang sugat

And when you are warm, scald with boiling water  
hindi totoo ito, ayaw kitang masaktan

In this huge enclosure  
ng buong buhay natin

We squeeze together from the hand that feeds us  
na mapalaki natin ang ating anak na walang malaking pangyayari

Stay on a thermal pad inside a synthetic rock  
na masama o na makulong tayo o mamatay

Away from the glare of the heating lamp  
sa ganitong paraan ko lang mapapaliwanag

To lose awareness of this prison  
na kaya andito pa tayo dahil meron pa tayong iisang gusto

Hide inside our soft shells  
at kahit hindi na tayo inlab sa isa't-isa

Coming out only to burrow and dig  
at minsan may gusto na sa iba

And dig a glass floor we forget often  
dito na muna tayo sa kulungan

We cannot break

# GHEE ERA CONTRA DRAW GAH

*(after Paolo Manalo's "bowl limn yeah")*

Noon wall upon talk  
hang mass ah yeah

Ma boo high  
Ma gun the puma

art E pair oh  
seam ooh la nag

Pa thigh an eye  
how con a loom

a bus the heel  
back a Ma

Abu tan act co—  
Daytona moon ah

tie you sub a high  
pay row who wag

Ma tack coat  
Hindi papa tallow

key do third tea  
mark cost hit lur

dick tad door two  
ta who wag tool a ran

Ma key back a  
love an

## THINGS BEST KEPT HIDDEN

10. when i was 22, i said portnoy's complaint was my favorite because i wanted the boy fucking me to love me and it turns out philip roth's a misogynist who hated women and glad i dodged that bullet but

9. at the playground, the two white men behind me: look at that. the working class and the capitalists

8. a story of rape: do I heart the bad news?

7. not taking a bath for days because no one's around to smell you anyway

6. at rallies, they still chant: Amerika imperyalismo ibagsak

5. there is no promise of holding you when this is over

4. lines you think of stealing but otherwise don't: minority within a minority, the drugs don't work, the dream outside my window

3. in a condominium in Mandaluyong is a room with a waiting area like a doctor's clinic's and while waiting for your turn you can already hear a girl wailing and after you're done it'd have never existed and all the unwanted advances the manhandling of the body the desire imposed are yours and yours alone

2. instead of videoke, i hear ambulance sounds now

1. we don't do that here