

TWO POEMS

Rayji De Guia

TERIMA KASIH

Ylang-ylang, morning-dewed, leads us to a temple of volcanic ash for worship—ilang-ilang, sambahan. Across the border

is a journey from Gautama to the Trimurti where the sun rises, both remnants before nations. Yesterday's murmurs

are like the Tagalog of my sister's demands, striking over the noise of Malioboro Street. Whatever it is,

I answer: Okay, thanks. In the rapid Bahasa around us, I have learned, here,

she is *kakak* in all but the word. Like kaka at home as any elder man because we

only knew age. She reminds me of Tanza or Trece Martirez: Missing sidewalks, impatient vehicles, dis-

gracias, old companions to a new place—yet, at dusk, *berdua kita selamat*, salamat.

UNMOTHERLY:

money; arithmetic; architecture, a career could have been; nice houses on magazines, nice kitchens; baking brownies, banana cake, cinnamon bread, blueberry muffins; Facebook in between; playing Candy Crush, playing volleyball; internet; teleserye; Angel Locsin; *Darna*, *Lobo*, *The Legal Wife*; inspiring quotes; trophies, good grades, award certificates we bring home; thank you gifts; opening gifts we give on Christmas eve; quick naps; washed pillows, fresh sheets; eight hours of sleep; the cold air of the secondhand aircon; the ice-cold water we give her; chocolate, fruitcake half-a-year later; tikoy in February, puto bumbong in December, a cake in June; not running out of funds; blouses on sale; ukay-ukay in Trece, ukay-ukay in Biñan; discounted trips; cheaper bills; useful hand-me-downs; cross-stitch; sewing shorts, sandos, trouser cuffs, little dresses, rips and holes; sturdy leather bags, buy one and take another; comfortable slippers, buy one pair and take another; walking around, walking anywhere; swimming in pools, lakes, the sea; water; buko juice; Minute Maid orange juice; coffee that is not too bitter; kopi-o at Albert Center, laksa; not so much sodas; fixing broken furniture, the leaking roof, decrepit doors; building benches, building shelves; a garden would be nice; gardening, houseplants; caring for her cacti, succulents, blooming basil buds, herself, the dying mint shrub we took home; rearranging, repotting her plants; langka, pinakbet, puso ng saging, atchara; not beef, not pork, chicken and fish will do; not pets; not dogs, not cats, maybe fish; setting up the aquarium; buying more fish; kutsinta from Imus, puto from Maragondon, palabok from the market, tinapa from Rosario; pomelo from Davao, pomelo from the tree in the backyard; flights, flying to Hong Kong; refrigerator magnets from places she couldn't visit; Starbucks mugs from places she couldn't visit; driving to Divisoria, driving from the airport, driving with us; resting in the passenger's seat; not rollercoasters though; going to church on her birthday; homecoming with high school friends; laughing, talking, replying; *Jane, call me Jane*—