

2016

The Belly

Aijuana Bifri
Dominican University of California

Survey: Let us know how this paper benefits you.

Recommended Citation

Bifri, Aijuana (2016) "The Belly," *The Tuxedo Archives*: Vol. 2009 , Article 2.
Available at: <https://scholar.dominican.edu/tuxedolit/vol2009/iss1/2>

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by the School of Liberal Arts and Education at Dominican Scholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Tuxedo Archives by an authorized editor of Dominican Scholar. For more information, please contact michael.pujals@dominican.edu.

THE BELLY

Aijuana Bifri

The Star-Spangled Banner plays and I don't have my hands on my heart

next thing I know, I hear,

"You anti-American immigrant leech

if you don't like America, why don't you leave?

if you don't like America, why don't you go home?

you've talked shit about this country

expressing your pain in this country

aren't you thankful we serve you in this country?

all you do is take money from this country

you ungrateful..."

Wait, wait, hold on. Ungrateful?

I wasn't here by choice

America looked at me in the eye and told me it was time

there was barely anything else to consume in my country

so America consumed me when I packed my bags a road a plane to LA

now this beast got me trapped in his belly

and every day I struggle for a peace of mind

In the Philippines...

the aftermath of colonial war got our parents slain

that's why children find a livin lookin up to white names

our rich culture and identity is left in hieroglyphics

now we live this sad reality today to be specific

Imagine houses made of cardboard and kids fifty pounds

kill each other for a bowl of soup, aint scared of the sound

of police, because it's fight and die or don't fight and die

this is Filipino reality when they look up to the sky

and see a billboard of the bully saying McDonald's and Coke

reminding you that he can feed you and bring you some hope

that's why we stab each other fearlessly, looking for change

but our hustle and our kill aint enough, it stays the same

each and every one of us tried to plant a seed to grow crops

but the bully buys it off so he could use it for stocks

he took our fruits with his Dole, took our milk with his Nestle

took our beach with his resort, took our shoes with his Nike's

tells us we can't progress, he's convinced us we're lazy

tells us we are less, while we watch his Hollywood babies

make us envy them and wish we were his little children

we look up to this cannibal who comes to us and we give him

what we have, but if we're broke he comes to swallow us whole

am I supposed to feel good when he's digesting what he stole?

digesting me, using me so he could grow, this tyrant

leviathan of the sea, ogre of a giant

We gave him all his nutrients, paying these taxes

working for less, build his success while he advances

he's been to different lands, swallowed other brothers and sisters

now he says he will deport us as his belly gets stricter

as if we're leaving his belly with more than we had before

his exploits, cost of living has made us remain poor

legal or illegal, immigrants boost the economy

washed white to bend in fields and prepared for sodomy

But maybe you're right, maybe I should be grateful

in his belly with my mom's paycheck-to-paycheck life

maybe I'd rather be here than my desolate land devoured

where billions of hungry mouths live each day with a dollar

Wherever I'm taken, without equity I'm restless

you see I'm not anti-American; I'm pro-justice.