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Poems by Luisa A. Igloria

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# MANIFEST DESTINY: INFINITE LOOP

Erasure poem sequence based on *The First Voyage Round the World, by Magellan (1874)* by Antonio Pigafetta, trans. Lord Stanley of Alderley

Luisa A. Igloria

( illustrious and very reverend )  
permit me to see and suffer  
but also desire

voyage By which

I wished to go;

of burning wood therefore by night a torch  
well soaked in. a thick cord of reeds  
water

the studding sail two lights

an answering signal.

he who kept first watch, on the following day

the end of a river

Many little villages

a port from which to enter  
Near the cape

days where we sojourned two

once a day at the hour of midday, there descends a cloud  
great abundance of water distils a

the animals, both domestic and wild, drink of it

Nevertheless,

arose this  
custom in this place of eating the enemies of each other  
; they eat him bit by bit, they cut him  
up into pieces, and eat it  
in memory of their enemies.

Very black, but rather brown These kind of people are not  
and there are an infinite number of parrots

pigs which have their navel on the back . There are also  
but their wives they would not give up for anything in the world.

It is to be known it had not rained for two months before we came , and the  
day we arrived it began to rain on which account the people said we came  
from heaven

A beautiful young girl came one day  
and saw a nail of a finger's

length,

and hid it in her hair,  
because she was naked

Virgins

we found

on the day of the Eleven Thousand

surrounded by mountains covered with snow  
within the Bay, where in the night we had a great storm

the peaceful sea

went further on and found a bay

Amongst us we thought

we saw

Two ships under all sail, with ensigns spread

Afterwards

inside this strait we found.

two mouths

died.  
one of the two

whom we had taken

the captain-general sent the ship named *Victory*  
the people  
were to place an ensign on the summit

with a letter inside a pot

: and he

caused a cross to be set upon a small island

sweet herb  
good waters, wood all of cedar,  
In it we found fish

a good port  
and a very

there is not

in the world a more beautiful country

when we wounded this people with our arrows,

immediately afterwards they died

for the love of those women  
we had killed. cried out and tore their hair

These people

adore nothing, and  
go naked

# TEN PARTS OF AN EXPEDITION

Luisa A. Igloria

1. Some people say immigrants can't tell the difference between jokes and non-jokes.
2. They're *always* so serious, even when their co-workers slap them on the shoulder and say I was only joking.
3. Words are like spells— once said, they cannot be unspoken.
4. According to one legend, the tree of heaven fell into the earth; its branches, heavy with sweet oranges, snaked through rock as veins of gold.
5. A true map will show where hills have been leveled, where plains are barren as sorrow; where soldiers came with guns to finish off the livestock.
6. This is where ships with foreign flags first dropped anchor in the bay; the shore, lined with rough grass, was a mouth sealed shut, never speaking of El Dorado.
7. You probe through fissures in rock; as you go, your body inching forward makes a tunnel.
8. The gods will not tell you if the roots of the tree are in Kabayan or Kibungan.
9. One does not fool around with language. One listens instead for thunder.
10. You knew what was yours for as long as you can remember. When someone takes your finger to make a mark on paper, the taste of rusted metal fixes in the air.

# ANIMUS

*Luisa A. Igloria*

It comes floating up from the depths:  
trailing scarves of pond scum, ancient

body flaccid now but the old hate still  
flashing dully in a few umber scales. Once

I bent my head to drink from the green  
waters, and with the first swallow

was betrothed. I was not taken away  
to a kingdom of glass and mirrors,

to a country where night was changed by  
day. My life was a spell: a series of small,

daily surrenders. My captor taught me  
of anger, how fists find hollows in walls.

I was not supposed to stand in the way:  
was meant to give and bend, lie still, let

the ordinary life settle over me as a fine  
net fallen on every surface. I look my terror

in the eye and ask what brings him out of the old,  
dank silence; how much of his own life remains.

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