

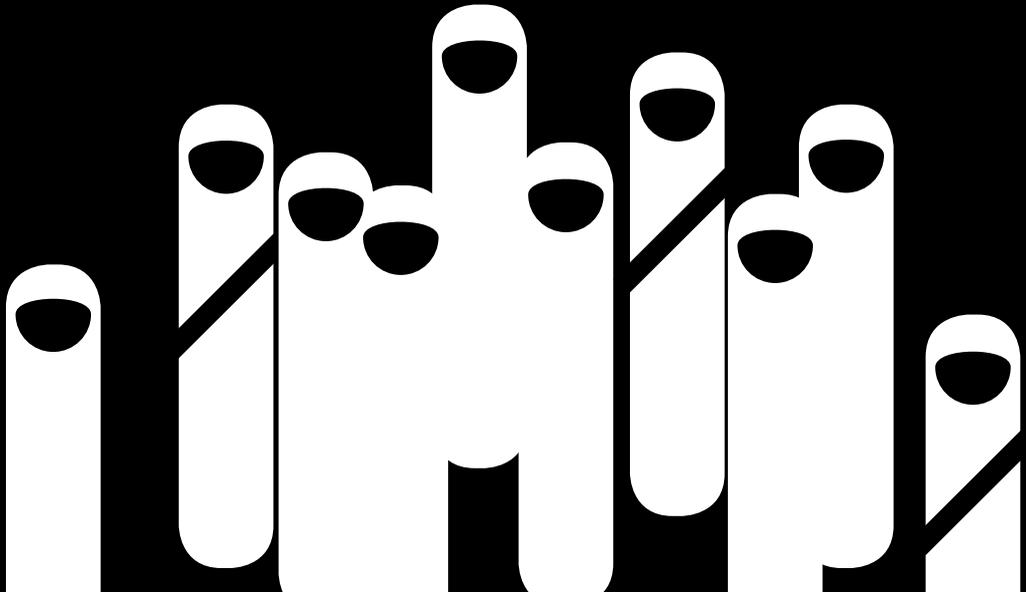
**the
gulag
arkipelago**

tinfish retro series

no. 10

poems

**sean labrador
y manzano**



Death to All Drug Traffickers

a sestina

1.

On customs claims, it is the phrase below declarations
and the boxes to declarations one must check or choose
to check before landing at the airport named for the exiled

Senator returning from Boston shot by drug traffickers,
by cronies of drug traffickers, by a presidency sponsored
by drug traffickers, by a presidency organized by drug traffickers

when the presidency needed to win a second term,
won in 1972 when drug traffickers were not socialists
or communists because socialists and communists

habitually questioned the role of drug traffickers nation-building.
You see it was this Senator's history negotiating peace
with socialists and communists; drug traffickers feared organization

acclimating Smoking Mountain, the Tao's land reform and rhetorical
transparency. Without song from Palace in the Sky, can a nation thrive?
Tenement haze of stove top kerosene and propane, burning

trash pits and dung forges light the perimeter of the airport
named after the assassinated Senator whose death marked
his housewife's presidential campaign and because of Cardinal Sin

2.

she won despite the efforts of drug traffickers paying the army to crush marches and rallies, to steal votes and ballot boxes holding votes, to intimidate the wives Cardinal Sin

organized on the cities' intersections, to steal records of voters who had faith in sanctity and security of ballot boxes, yes before landing at the airport named for the husband of once Boston-exiled

housewife-turned president, passengers choose or not choose declaration boxes. Inside the airport, customs agents scrutinize chosen and unchosen boxes, determine contraband from gift, burn

a gentle lens into boxes, decipher the intent of boxes, speculate the deceit of boxes, yes at the airport customs agents compare boxes to passengers and passports organized

from fictional places of origin because it is necessary for customs agents to rend all passports as fictions, and all places stamped as passenger imagination, traffickers

of itinerant histories between places certainly to not exist. Only the terminal exists. And because the terminal exists, everything entering it exists, even the socialists and communists

3.

blacklisted from returning, risk salvage by drug traffickers.
An airport named after a dead senator whose fame claims
making peace with socialists and communists

without sanction of the presidency and for that matter
without sanction of drug traffickers invites defiance to all
incumbents. But, what happens when exiles learn: Cardinal Sin

colludes with drug traffickers, and wives organized by Sin on the cities
intersections are the wives of drug traffickers, and soldiers opposing
the wives of drug traffickers are the brothers of drug traffickers,

and poll watchers intimidated by the army conscripted by drug traffickers
are employed by drug traffickers to aid and abet the sales of drug traffickers.
“How long is your stay?” the customs claim asks the exile.

“How long is your stay,” repeats the customs agent, to compare
the customs sincere claim to the tenor avowing length
of one’s intended stay. The routine interrogation organized

and somnolescent, a ritual cadence. It is possible to pay out
of scrutiny. It is possible to pay for silence. It is customary to pay
airport customs agents “the airport tax,” a windfall burning

4.

into the hearts of customs agents, the prospect of boxes regardless if they are checked or unchecked are not scrutinized for being checked and unchecked. It is customary to quench the burning

appetite of customs agents: Prepare tax in fold of passport. They expect to be paid to look above the chosen boxes and empty boxes—to the socialists and communists

among the disembarked, often a mute line with passports prepared and unprepared. They are expected to measure the length of the line, estimate the flight's tax return, weigh fictions and origins of passports organized

and disorganized, scrutinize the many declaration boxes checked and unchecked. In this silent line are those returning from overseas because not returning rather to choose not to return is a mortal sin.

The OFW, or the OCW, the Balikbayan, the Japayuki sometimes with them are husbands and boyfriends acquired overseas, sometimes these overseas husbands and boyfriends are exiles,

and sometimes the husbands and boyfriends are native of those fictional places overseas, and in their boxes are candies from overseas, are colorful paper monies drug traffickers

5.

will exchange for a fee in the banks owned and operated by them, and sometimes in the boxes there are bottles of beer or whiskey, vodka or wine, tequila and scotch because even drug traffickers

understand their monopoly of local alcohol cannot satisfy demand, and sometimes in the boxes there are cigarettes and cigars, not like the cigarettes and cigars sold on the cities intersections. The burning

of these are for public display. Occasions like the fiesta, weddings and baptismals, at the casino or cock pit when consuming such cigarettes and cigars are meant to impress. Yes, the exiled

do not smoke but perform smoking. It is an acquired skill that exiles learn overseas, a skill mastered in the coffeehouses and salons, tearooms and bathhouses, by the socialists and communists.

Gluttony is modern—ask any customs agent familiar with the customs of those fictional places overseas. Gluttony is the reason the terminal exists. And because the terminal exists gluttony is not a sin.

And because the nation has moved on from the many years of Martial Law, naming an airport after a dead senator shot on the tarmac by drug traffickers is modern. How organized crime tired him. So when asked about organized

6.

sports not operated by drug traffickers, the Senator fancied Jim Rice leading the American League in home runs, fancied Wade Boggs' batting average, fancied drafting pitchers. In line Scouts are returning mamasans and tias seeking to fill billets in cloisters

and parlours. There are headhunters recruiting for phlebotomists or chambermaids, pious and ornate. Sometimes among them are tourists, returning and new. In between this silent line and the carousel revolving with boxes belonging to drug traffickers

and boxes not belonging to drug traffickers drift unclaimed, waiting to be claimed is the customs agent. In between the carousel housed by the terminal that exists and the waiting world negotiated by Sin,

is the customs agent. A diesel world. Vans, busses, jeepneys and for-hire-drivers waiting to claim those claimed and unclaimed boxes, robed kerosene-propane-burned trash-wood fire haze, burning

intersection cigarettes smolder intersection sampaguita, a gulag massif erupts. Servicing the carousel, the ubiquitous "gap-filler," embodiment of zero unemployment theorized by the socialists and communists,

fines the use of the baggage cart, fines the finding and lifting of boxes from the carousel to the baggage cart, fines for pushing the baggage cart to the next customs agent, and in the restroom fines the returning exile

7.

for using the restroom stall, for a sheet of toilet paper, the use of the faucet, a lather of soap, a dry hand towel, a pump of hand lotion, cologne. And among the socialists and communists there are Balikbayans who know nothing about drug traffickers

and are envious of the husbands and boyfriends collected overseas for knowing more than they do, envious of the talent scouts and headhunters for knowing more than they do, envious of the tourists, who know more about the country, about the exiled

about Sin during Martial Law and Sin after Martial Law. It is these people who know nothing about home and homecoming whose boxes checked or unchecked say more about the fiction of exile. The customs agent knows that nothing is burning.

Male Order

a sestina

1.

The pictured bride is not cropped. She simply does not exist. She puddles her way through cream of broccoli soup. She does not know what to do with the seeded

baguette. Floret slips stainless steel spoon. Shivers like flotsam enveloping talinghagha. An ensleaved spoon endeavors cream. Shudders the pictured bride thinking what lengths

cream reaches, a kinetic, an urge, curls emergent dragon or tiger, crocodile or tamaraw, harpy or 2-step. Sums the bowl, cream tars spoon, hand wields like scrotum. Encroached

too she feels Promise Ring. What else would she have bargained. Biceps tense cream after flesh. Retainers are non-negotiable when dined. Syllabic clouds tangle glass bowl.

She stirs soup. Blow waves. Ushers weather. Pipelines unfold Barrier Reefs. She thinks of meeting the journalist who showed her National Geographic Antarctica photographs

while staking out spreadsheet models at the municipal library. He liked them bookish. If only she had luxury to worry about ozone and rising sea levels. Pepper flakes sink

2.

her cloud form pyroclastic locusts salvage tumbled trees. She clots cream. Her lover's cum is as textured, crowflock meditating carrion of her navel. The journalist descends

on her belly. How he jacked off puddles. So many puddles. The wash cloth, a deleterious affair. Lapses cum. She coerces puddles surf and stir. Surface effects placate pepper seed

their own logic, stiff, soundless, tasteless speech. Cum is. She thinks there is deepness understanding broccoli. The process wields floret above bowl, third world poster

of child's discovery of New World plenty. She puddles indulgence of, being indulged. Much to her dismay, the crawl space between littoral and literary is a surface effect wide

to be palimpsest, her cloud form displaces her stomach's rumbling, a baguette is after thought, something that is dropped in to cream and sucked beneath. Fact of a glass bowl.

Just think one of her thoughts sinking but some thoughts are worth missing are worth losing in strange soups. She wishes she could account for thoughts lost. Flakes encroach

3.

a disturbed logic. She wants to meet a disturbed flake. Constellated a distance ago. Distances her mind informed by trajectories bodies elapsed over time fluid, encroach

momentum of surface effects. The picture bride giggles, nothing gets done. She is peppered. The silly organza her lover wore, pineapple pattern, glascine descends

the puddle slipped on her, as capiz shell polished for wind chime. Flakes move when she is not looking, she does not know how she hangs submerged and blustered in glass bowl.

She is moved by their evasion. Her anonymity and swarthy winking binds more moving things in her world reserved for logic, informed trajectories and distances, a cavan's seed

produces hectares when dung plowed. Her lover anticipates less of the clapboard contract when prophecy's wise intrusion alters taste. Flake out of place reprimands longing

to assemble disproportionate parts, smooth clumps, to predispose broccoli and resolve questions of soil nutrition and other thoughts lost to logic. She is an unsteady picture

4.

of diaspora, webcam's work-in-progress, a chatroom missive, deliberated by many lovers ascending many timezones. But the man in the pineapple weave purchased her picture

and a years worth of updates. He paid the agent for permission to draft letters of interest and letters of intent, purchased courtship rights so that other parties do not encroach,

to avoid a bidding war. But where she is bodies have an elapsed time. Constellate disinterest in a bidding war, then how is value measured. A pictured bride cannot long

for a highest bidder, to know her worth. The man in the pineapple suit fettered the acquisition. Worrying about fetters, the theory of reciprocity, Utang na loob, submerges

evidence of the clapboard contract. She deliberates the word describing that crawl space between the littoral and the literary, where her lover unfolds: cleft, the succor of seeds.

Cleft the wayfarers weighstation. Cleft, the ontological schism, talent scouts will not amend the clapboard contract, a luxury even a prominent sulcus defers the glass bowls

5.

noetic register. Stewardship adjures the crowflock and scavenges gladiolus. She remembers to breathe. She is moved by her breathing. Her concentration moves the bowl.

Puddles lose shape, a manubrium's surface effect, a resuscitated vulgate asserts collapsed geography. Shudder the furrow informed by fluid trajectories and fluid distances. Portrait

assumes the whore's shape. Lost to logic's disproportionate dispersed clumps. Logic's buoyant derelict baguette. Logic's admiralty compasses rose, barratry of exonerate seeds.

Rapprochement correspondents fattened. If such a maritime law exist would she be fortunate? But such thoughts are lost luxury. A purser's dignity remains in intrusion.

Doctrine's parallax urges puissance, the collaborator's hymencenium. In the barrio, the pictured bride collapses unmentionables tiled at the mah jong table. Slapped pairs sink

truths. Bukara, the batch advises clapboard's inconvenience is convenient. Tiles reassert themselves as themselves. The bride in the mirror wonders if her last game amounts to

6.

luxury. Mind the mah jong table's roach speak. Stir no complaint. Accommodate wedge of cream of broccoli soup. But can ontology deliver the baguette from cream's reach?

A floret slips off stainless steel spoon. A talinghagha slaps a talinghagha. Commiserate dehiscence, sulcus informed by fluid bodies. Fluid repetition refutes shuddering bowl's

obeisance. Repetition's surface effects between the littoral and the literary. Puddles. Many puddles. Her mind. Syllabic clouds proportion themselves around septum's sunken

trove, if only her sponsor guarantees the clapboard contract can she then simply exist? But the admiralty cannot commute her sentence. The law copyrights all photographs

and likenesses to be struck from future bulletins should clapboard contract voids. Perhaps the bride thinks atavistic flowerbeds underwrite revisionist corollaries. Who enters

the crawl space between the littoral and the literary secures assets, provides luxury to worry such problems as global warming or laws of the sea. Lost in strange soups, seeds

7.

refrain caution. The bride wonders, can she simply exist puddling cream of broccoli soup? Shudders the picture. She will get fat if not cautious. Inviolable prize punctum,

wedge submersible, ensleaved and endeavored, bridge between correspondents, want and unwanted, assertion and disavowal. The receding privacy of her crawl space, she longs

for indulgence. But for the glass bowl. The checkered tablecloth drapes the waist down. Outside the restaurant, snow. Don't expect mini-skirt or décolletage. In her hand, seeds.

Mycorrhizal

a sestina

1.

Longinus trip hops the Shabu house's corrugated steel roof. Mad Hatter and
Cheshire Cat surface snort. Barney shares Grinch's blunt grind fatigue dance plank
floor. Tired contrails scatter Tinkerbell's rafters. Spider maps eccentric

moorings. Glass pipes convict weak stomachs, brass houkas dilute writer's fiction.
Mindful Lethargy promises lost articles. Elastic chords when tongues lose plasticity.
Kitchen's needle exchange and spoon dance relent nitrous fishing

balloon. Propane range cooks rice krispies. Tea kettle festers grease. Bean bags
slobber pot bellies. I gaze navel lint and peach fuzz. Flesh addicts are sublime.
Flesh addicts are attractive. I feel to eviscerate the bean bag of corn starch

stuffing but decide not to knowing the mime troupe will mistake the message.
I could use a flesh addict now. Mary mortared between cinder blocks. Cinder
blocks crack ant sanctuary. Ants unzip her anti-Barbie torso from the cunt

up. Niobium piercing is good for: relieve one meat puppet for another. Moth shaped
blankets rattan rocker chairs. In a couple hours crank whores shape mothened
blankets upholstering rattan rocker chairs. Would a meat puppet pose

on a rattan rocker chair? Unless she's a crank whore. Unless her inner boll-
weevil determines. I am pressed to pee on white clapboard siding and take Red
Horse Ale outside and the paddy reminds me of dung smell of carabao.

2.

Longinus plows carabao dung into the paddy, lingers the smells: the chicken shit and the duck shit and their smell, the outflow from kitchens and bathrooms, the human smell, the shallow cesspools, the taro behind cinderblocks. The carabao

minds the cesspool, karaoke's prolixity, diesel leaks from the kuliglig with Iowa Hawkeye bumper sticker (that everyone wants), Herkey's image purchased in Iowa City (on my way to Waukegan). Garbage pits melt plastic's eccentric

oxbows. Kerosene fumes dinner. Don't mind the extra protein when ants help themselves, in the soil blood clots from butchering is taro's fertility, guests are revered with dog meat. Gin bottles teethe when plastered. Turkeys repose

in the acacia. I am not in an amphitheatre in a Santa Cruz redwood forest, or in the Grecian hills above Piedmont Avenue, or Maritime Hall in the South of Market, or converted body shop in the Mission, or diminished dune depression fishing

nitrous, or Carmelite canyon behind a gated community. Bitter hops swallow dusky throat and strip naked the memory of tear gas, congers kerosene and burnt plastic. Prophecy is mindful lethargy. Stars are cavernous cunts

fimbriated in their lazy posture. Yes, a crank whore should strip naked. Me or her is what price of hubba. Help my penis write my name on white clapboard siding. Even if she's no flesh addict. Then I remember Atropine, the navy starch.

3.

Longinus would have learned in bootcamp, the Great Lake's mistake. Jab hypodermic into Smurf thigh when exposed to war's fog. Recognize dry land drowning's eccentric contrail. Jab contrail's recognizable starch

form. Feel dry larynx knocking the syllabic cloud. The syllabic reiterates the dry land drowning. A gelding egos the white picket corral sleeps upright. Shroom-heads fixate the stable straw. Statuesque, the orchid hunter sees the carabao.

Somebody stoned it. She packs Trainwreck I bought from the Chiropractor before leaving the States. You think we can steal her she asks. She's already stolen snort the cock doctor's son. Besides trouble a carabao's fate not studded to cunts

is Elmer's glue or Crisco. Should I jab hypodermic the crank whore can play the skin flute outside and yes I will be her text boyfriend if she favors perform and message text advertising clapboard contract. Text loop eccentric

the towers advertising themselves as themselves. I recline the mothened rocker chair, gaze Cassiopeia and Andromeda's navels. Like choosing medium of after-birth? The paint cans deliberate their oxides. Mercury in the water table agrees. Fishing

every caesarian, a slug cries in his beer. Puke Elmer's glue or Crisco beneath the acacia, the carabao will add to its labor. Jet fuel drop-tanks rust the southern yard I could advise her. The poison is there and not in her mouth, lead batteries compose

4.

Longinus' cesspool, the garbage pit, the towers advertising themselves, the contrails of the clapboard, the hypodermic's war fog, the text in the message, the text messaging. The advertising messaging themselves. Embers fade the bowl. I suppose

resinous pintos foul flooded water cress fields. Articles, the Dutch Colony rusts. The Sun Silk of the mortared Mary. The perineum below the skin flute. The skin flute's mercury. The mercury's messaged text advertising the syllabic starch

the orchid hunter examines the orchids thrust into cocoanut husks. She reads her schism. Dolor of a kuliglig tractor pull. Belinda's *conqu'ring fore of unresisted Steel?* the snort surfacing piggish, I think of my stepfather studding boars fishing

the pen's corncob stuffing, otherwise mutable shapes, orchids sling gonads, the buses find plenty and cannot ignore the diesel's elastic chord: the Eria rhodoptera, Dendrochilum paravalum, Bulophyllum nymopolitatum. The plotting carabao

can give a shit, the sylph's busy fetish, from snort mole crickets surface, the acacia fond shade, where I prepared my essay on Pope's *Lock* and mindful of lethargic turkeys, Kirk Hammet's soliloquy a teething massif. Enter the eccentric's

tremolo, the dogcatcher collects his dogs, the cantos peel, and the dogcatcher collects more dogs, the mole crickets collect in coffee cans, the palay collect clay, the oxides deliberate the vulcanization of tires. Is the abonado a guarantor of cunts

5.

Longinus asks when cunts lose plasticity? When washed of mortar. The schism of her clapboard. Ligatures slur an austere shape, the pun I should teach him, the clapboard's punctum, of the paddy shark's gaze: Civilian Under Naval Training

is the Great White Fleet's Recruit Command's barrack's meat puppet the mistake on the Great Lake, blue and three apples tall, and all salseros karaoke mic'd, katonk katonk the cocoanuts heave themselves androeciums, Herkey's pose:

remember a photograph I took at a reststop outside Iowa City, I had written my name in snow, Marinetti's manifesto, semi-colons tripped into culverts. The clapboards determining my weevil journey through Middle America. The diner eccentric

served homefries and sausage asked what kind of Injun was I, and I thought of staying Smurfy fit performing self-destructs and '69 Chevies to the Rainman's cadence. Bunkbeds to the bulkheads, the company commander's cobbled starch.

It's called muscle memory: the barrack's linoleum contours the Smurf, lingers perspiration the Smurf clavicle, the jumping jack of the self-destruct, the push-up of the self-destruct, the Chevy's simultaneous sit-ups Smurf shoulders yoked carabaos

those mewing steers, katonk katonk, sings the pederast, a troops medium of after-birth. Or mindful, perhaps, the pun I should not teach, the clapboard punctum undeveloped, and the paddy shark's CUNT gaze rearranges the dog fishing

6.

Longinus' hypodermic. Mortared Mary and Mad Hatter barefoot the cock and hen dance. Schism's austere shape. Proleptic articles abbreviate karaoke's speakers. Bunker mentality pins the brigadista's lint navel and fuzzy peach. Bone fishing

is plenty when addicts are not sour. Somewhere between the alternate geographies. Question the shape of a messaged text, faked. Is quiet thinking the centipedal towers wire bound. Humility she lay her back, barter air pisspot mouth cunt:

the Amesiella, the Megalotus bifidus, the Bubophyllum maxillare, the Epiggeneium treacherianum. The mole crickets affect themselves. Katonk katonk jab's Grinch. His war fiction mindful. Katonk katonk Barney determines carabaos.

If the abonado is the guarantor of cunt debt as Longinus suggests, wouldn't a clapboard contract advertise itself as itself? I am pressed to pee. Determines my weak stomach ants remove her and then is she im/penetrable? Prophecy supposes

the trouble of. Take for example the shellmound. Hymenopterans mandible calcium carbonate, the daily missal. They are scheming beyond the land grant's amphitheatre, perhaps jaundiced and smug, transparent the sky's abysmal starch.

Seconds before a meat puppet becomes aware it's a meat puppet. Those scheming meat puppets refusing to self-destruct. Naked is their memory of tear gas, the implication of an avowed Smurf community. How to recognize the prodigal eccentric.

7.

Longinus of the mortared Mary, of his or her mournful dolor. Would he still fetishize the blonde lock if he were an American cabinboy like me? Yes, what brings me back. Longinus needs to know what it means to be a cabinboy, an insect

investigating the testes of former masters: to expose the narrow tube and laud the orchestra fathoming bundoks outside Intramuros. Where the jungle belongs. But no jungle is there. Returning there never was. What eccentric slouches to be born?

My intravenous vessel, talinghaha. I will fucking kill the cherub who mocks me with vision. Longinus' schism, his gallstone's austere shape, from the recruiting office, plots a carabao's wake. Fishing corrugated steel roof starch.

about the poet

SEAN LABRADOR Y MANZANO was born in Tripler Army Hospital aka The Pink Palace. Went to Likelike Elementary School, Aliamanu Middle School and Waipahu Middle School. Father was stationed at NB Pearl Harbor, then NAS Barber's Point. In the 1920s, his Manong Pio, imported to the plantations of the Big Island—began the surge of Manzanos into Hawai'i.

He is a poet of postcolonial eroticism who lives on the island off the coast of Oakland, CA. He teaches English, History and Government during the daytime and curates a monthly MFA mixer. He realized he wanted to be a poet during a revealing full-body cavity search in a Pensacola naval penitentiary.

In 2010–11, Sean Labrador y Manzano appeared in *Conversations at a Wartime Café* (<http://www.mcsweeneys.net/columns/conversations-at-a-wartime-cafe>), *Fag/Hag*, *Tayo*, *Beeswax*, *Our Own Voice*, *Try*, *Volt*, *The Walrus*, *The Poetry of Yoga*, and elsewhere, and has edited JS Waters' novel, *The Modern Primitives*, and the *Altered Barbie 2010* anthology. He edits the annual anthology, *Conversations at a Wartime Café*.



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