

# My Country's Chains

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establish continuity. Continuity means either we have good choices or we don't. Don't you think that voting for the lesser evil is still evil? Evil manifests itself through ambiguity and circumspection. Ambiguity and Circumspection sounds like a well-respected law firm. A well-respected law firm is handling the impeachment complaint against the chief justice. The chief justice claims she has overpaid her taxes. Taxes are part of the social contract a citizenry enters into with a state. A state is a political organization that exerts legitimate use of force or violence on a territory. Violence on a territory marks every administration, but some administrations are more marked than others.

*Others* is what we call those who fall outside the majority. The majority has been concentrated into a choking urban setting. Setting aside the casket, fans, card-games to raise funds, snacks of crackers, and coffee, there is also the continuity of grief. Grief is not an animal. Animals stalk our ferocious love in the flickering wild, fiery and fugitive nights. Nights

claim what is familiar, what is nothing, and what is wrong with the people, with the nation, and with the world. The family claims the nation as their people, along with its stones, its lumber, its rubber, its oils, its greens, its seas, its skies, and its labor. The nothing claims so many, from so many homes, in a variety of methods utilizing force and firearms. The wrong claims its representatives are scattered throughout many sectors and fields, keeping finances and metrics of power in check, educating the children, and doing the good Lord's work. The people claim they are not united in many aspects, that many want reforms, while many want radical changes, while many want arms to implement these reforms and changes, but all are in agreement that they want rice, housing, protection, and sleep. The nation claims it is not fully-formed, and will most likely never be fully-formed, and that the moment it becomes fully formed, it would become the corpse of a foolish nation. The world claims our loves. Our flawed, heroic loves, all worthy of grace,

are not yours. You are static backgrounds of watercolor which evoke dental check-ups and appointments at the barangay office. The barangay office says local elections have been postponed to next year. Next year, there will be more building and building and building, so it will be impossible for the static landscape to remain still. Remain still, please, that's all we ask of you. You should know by now that you can be targeted, but somehow you still continue your campaign against the economic 1%. 1% of the Marcos' ill-gotten wealth can buy 11,110 low-cost houses for the poor. The poor want bread while middle-class intellectuals want suffering, goes the saying. The saying succeeds the thought, which succeeds the construction of a static watercolor landscape in one's mind, a river of pure pastoral fantasy, the sky a blue you have no hexadecimal codes for, fields that stretch a soft green. Green fields, that's what you deserve, because you're our friend, our pure-hearted friend, full of wealth. A wealth of greens, iridescent seas, unobstructed skies

dream of God. Oh our country, were that you did not know hunger or abuse, but love and the grace of God. Hail holy queen mother of mercy, mediatrix of the lowly, the downtrodden, with God. Perhaps the labor union gives a worthy articulation of the gospel of God. In the dark forest sleeps God. Whatever supreme power the head of state tries to invoke, it surely isn't God. The children marvel at the curly hair and brown skin, and suckle from the teats of God. Where have you gone, our God? The officers do not know that they have not only killed the drug-addicted, the poor, the abused, but also God. Here the years seem to pass without a word from God. We wonder if we will ever truly know happiness, even without knowing God. Her voice resounds to the land, *let My people go*, and the people know it is God. Please no, have mercy, oh God. In the night, under the street's smoke and lamplights, surrounding the mourners, outside the skyscrapers, beyond the reach of capital, while everyone was being fed, without any loud fuss, there was God. We