

Mano Po

by: J.C. Rodriguez

My *lolo's* meals are brought to him by tiny ghosts. Knives hang by his window. He tells me he watches TV all day but there is no TV in his room. I wonder what other lies the ghosts tell him.

He speaks in *tagalog* & asks me why I don't understand. I tell him he never taught me. He tells me it is because I am never home. We have not shared a home in 11 years.

Every time we remember the past differently, knives fall like broken wind chimes & hit his ghost aides. They quit. Eventually, he will run out of ghosts to tell him he was a good man.

He tells me my mother & tita put him here. He explains it to me like I am still a boy. He does not know I had a seat at the table when the family decided. I try to tell him but he does not want to hear it. He grabs the last hanging knife himself.

I tell him to put the knife down & I get it tattooed on my arm instead. He asks to see it while we wait. He asks every time I visit & all we do is wait.



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