



**ELVIS A. GALASINAO JR.**

**Every time I introduce myself,**

they hold me up to the light like a blackout poem,  
guessing the words I have deliberately left out.

They ask me if I am always feminine,  
and remark that Asian parents are  
the most old-fashioned, all in the same breath.

I say I was born and raised in a small town  
with a green landscape, rice paddies, and cornfield,

or I've been wanting to see Artemisia Gentileschi's  
*Judith Slaying Holofernes* at the Museo Capodimonte.

I want them to walk with me along the  
shoreline outside the brick walls, and feel the  
frisson of energy from the warm sand beneath  
our feet while waving the rainbow scarf.

Except all they want to do is make me choose  
the lipstick shade that best suits their skin tone and  
put words on my mouth to force a confession out of it.



## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Elvis A. Galasinao Jr.** was born to Filipino parents in 1996 in Isabela, Philippines. He teaches English and Literature and is currently enrolled in the MA Language and Literature program of the De La Salle University.