

philippine studies

Ateneo de Manila University • Loyola Heights, Quezon City • 1108 Philippines

Being a Son

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Philippine Studies vol. 53, no. 2&3 (2005): 447–448

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Fri Jun 27 13:30:20 2008

LAWRENCE LACAMBRA YPIL

Being a son

meant the door opening;
a draft entering
the afternoon room
and everyone else sleeping
with their mouths open, their legs;

or if you were my father, the doctor,
outside in the world
touching other people's bodies opening,
holding a stick into a woman
who could not swallow for days,

without it hurting. It being
the edge of her throat, her voice,
loose commands, or the end of her mouth
the base of her tongue, its root—

it would have been much easier.
There would have been other ways
to find the edge of the world,

with a swift pen-light, or a word
or something mumbled from the other
side of the desk, to get dressed

because it was clear what was wrong.
Button into its hole and a skirt.
Pill into the long funnel of the body

meant we had such faith in science;
meant I was partly his because I was half
his making, half his wish

all the bad dreams he could not wake up from
when he was young, in an old afternoon
sleeping, the well outside his house opening

its secret mouth, deep into the world

where he knew fish were moving,
the earth shifting its feet,
his son of many suns

of many years to come was making
his mind move the wind.