

James Brown's Wig & Other Poems



Melinda Luisa de Jesús

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“Too many women, especially women of color, have had a lifetime of practice taking precisely these kinds of indignities in stride. But why should we have to? And any woman who thinks this couldn’t be directed at her is living in a dream world.”

Hilary Clinton, Professional Business Women
of California Conference, 3/28/17

“People lived their lives in a state of permanent shell shock, like dynamite-blasted fish still somehow capable of swimming. This is what constant, permanent exposure to alternative reality does: it deafens and deadens you.”

Mikhail Iossel, “Life Under Alternative Facts”
The New Yorker, 2/5/17

Contents

Alternative Patriotic Songs

1. To the tune of “My Country, ‘Tis of Thee”
2. To the tune of “Three Blind Mice”
3. To the tune of “America the Beautiful”

More Alternative Nursery Rhymes

4. Donny had a little lamb
5. SCROTUS-thief, pussy-grabber-in-chief
6. Hay(na)ku for Maxine Waters
7. James Brown’s Wig and Drumpf’s Toupee
8. Sinister, or Notice to Racist White Men

Alternative Patriotic Songs

1. To the tune of *My Country, 'Tis of Thee*

This country is for ME
I need more money
of ME I sing
Land where my father died
Land of white supremacist pride
From every mountainside
Trump cash registers ring.

2. To the tune of *Three Blind Mice*

Too many greedy businessmen
No real legislators
See how they obfuscate
See how they deviate
They tried to steal the election
To give Putin an erection
Collusion, treason and perjury
May they all serve hard time.

3. To the tune of *America, the Beautiful*

O terrible polluted skies
and GMO-tainted grain
the mountain's strip-mined majesty
above the barren plain
Trumplandia, Trumplandia
The Founders weep for thee
and curse thy greed,
thy misogynistic, xenophobic need
And pray their checks and balances prevail.

More Alternative Nursery Rhymes

1.

Donny had a little lamb
Her “feminism” white as snow

Everywhere her daddy went
Ivanka was sure to go

She followed him to the White House
Which was against the rules

It made the nation scream with rage
to see Donny’s blatant nepotism

Then Donny made Ivanka’s husband
chief of cleaning up all his shit

She wasn’t jealous cuz she’s still daddy’s favorite
So Ivanka didn’t mind it one bit.

SCROTUS thief, pussy-grabber-in-chief
How does your country grow?
With white supremacy, racial terror
And Russian espionage
And treasonous Republicans all in a row.

Hay(na)ku* for Maxine Waters

1.
Maxine
Waters does
not play, chump.

she's
tweeting *KremlinKlan*
impeachment, the works

she
knows and
“loves the Constitution”

she's
“out to
get you” and

Sister
Maxine always
gets her man.

2.

“Papa’s
got a
brand new bag,”

Tinky
Winky does,
too. O’Reilly’s bag

reeks
of desperate
Klansman trying to

KEEP
IT UP
flaccid useless distraction

*Hay(na)ku is a tercet-based poetic form created by
Filipina American poet Eileen Tabios.

James Brown's Wig and Drumpf's Toupee

James Brown's Wig said to Drumpf's Toupee
"Man, your boy fucked it up today!"

"What'd who do? Was it Nunes or that punk Flynn?"

"Nah, O'Reilly came for Maxine and he didn't win
Said he couldn't hear a word she said
because of the James Brown wig up on her head."

"What? He did? Terrible. Sad." (snickers)

(JBW sings):

*That's it! Payback! Revenge! I'm mad.
Payback is a thing you gotta see
Brother do any damn thing to me*

"Hey, just gotta ask," whines Drumpf's Toupee
How do you get yourself so big that way?"

(JBW sings)

*Hey, country, you didn't say what you meant
You just changed, a brand new funky President
People, people, we've got to get over
Before we go under*

The thinning toupe shivers, jealous, at the sight
Of JBW's luscious curls, so sexy and tight.

"Come on, tell me, what's your secret, 'cuz I'm stayin.
I ain't afraid of no one, not even Maxine, and I ain't
playin!"

(JBW sings)

*I got the something that makes me wanna shout
I got that thing that tells me what it's all about
I got soul, ha, and I'm super bad*

“That’s my secret, Drumpf Toupee, don’t be a hater.
Tell the Russians ‘hi’, and I’ll see you later.”

*Lyrics from Brown’s “Payback,” “Funky President”
and “Super Bad.”*

Sinister, or Notice to Racist White Men

Learn how to read, Primalya Jayapal!
I hate your hair, Maxine Waters!
Stop shaking your head, April Ryan!

it's 2017 and
white men still so used to
 controlling
 humiliating
 mocking
 berating
 raping
 killing
uppity women of color
when we speak truth to power.

You keep trying to put us
in our place
 in the kitchen
 in the fields
 in your bed
 10 feet under

yet
still we rise
we persist.

we're not your mammies, ayas, sextoys, maids
like it or not
we're your equals--
 no, we're *better* than you

so mark these words:

we know you better than you know us
our grandmothers taught us survival skills
we come armed with their wisdom and spells
our law degrees and good english

our black girl magick can't be contained
our brilliance won't be dimmed
fear our dark glory
we come for you

Artist Statement

I was born and educated in Pennsylvania; my parents were emigrants from the Philippines. Growing up brown in a predominantly white steel town has shaped me in ways I'm constantly exploring in my writing. I identify primarily as a feminist of color. Professionally I teach and write about critical race theory, girlhood and monsters. I'm also a classically-trained mezzo-soprano who dreams of singing in a funk band, an Aquarian, and a mother of two. I drink hard liquor and love Hello Kitty.

I believe, as did the ancients, that a poem can change the world.

Oakland, Califas
April 2017

MAKIBAKA!

Locofo Chaps

2017

Eileen Tabios – *To Be An Empire Is To Burn*

Charles Perrone – *A CAPacious Act*

Francesco Levato – *A Continuum of Force*

Joel Chace – *America's Tin*

John Goodman – *Twenty Moments that Changed the World*

Donna Kuhn – *Don't Say His Name*

Eileen Tabios (ed.) – *Puñeta: Political Pilipinx Poetry*

Gabriel Gudding – *Bed From Government*

mLEKAL aND – *Manifesto of the Moment*

Garin Cycholl – *Country Musics 20/20*

Mary Kasimor – *The Prometheus Collage*

lars palm – *case*

Reijo Valta – *Truth and Truthmp*

Andrew Peterson – *The Big Game is Every Night*

Romeo Alcala Cruz – *Archaeoteryx*

John Lowther – *18 of 555*

Jorge Sánchez – *Now Sing*

Alex Gildzen — *Disco Naps & Odd Nods*

Barbara Janes Reyes – *Puñeta: Political Pilipinx Poetry, vol. 2*

Luisa A. Igloria – *Puñeta: Political Pilipinx Poetry, vol. 3*

Tom Bamford – *The Gag Reel*

Melinda Luisa de Jesús – *Humpty Drumpfty and Other Poems*

Allen Bramhall – *Bleak Like Me*

Kristian Carlsson – *The United World of War*

Roy Bentley – *Men, Death, Lies*

Travis Macdonald – *How to Zing the Government*

Kristian Carlsson – *Dhaka Poems*

Barbara Jane Reyes – *Nevertheless, #She Persisted*

Martha Deed – *We Should Have Seen This Coming*
Matt Hill – *Yet Another Blunted Ascent*
Patricia Roth Schwartz – *Know Better*
Melinda Luisa de Jesús – *Petty Poetry for SCROTUS' Girls,*
with poems for Elizabeth Warren and Michelle Obama
Freke Räihä – *Explanation model for 'Virus'*
Eileen R. Tabios – *Immigrant*
Ronald Mars Lintz – *Orange Crust & Light*
John Bloomberg-Rissman – *In These Days of Rage*
Colin Dardis – *Post-Truth Blues*
Leah Mueller – *Political Apnea*
Naomi Buck Palagi – *Imagine Renaissance*
John Bloomberg-Rissman and Eileen Tabios –
Comprehending Mortality
Dan Ryan – *Swamp Tales*
Sheri Reda – *Stubborn*
Aileen Cassinetta – *B & O Blues*
Mark Young – *the veil drops*
Christine Stoddard — *Chica/Mujer*
Aileen Ibardaloza, Paul Cassinetta, and Wesley St. Jo – *No*
Names
Nicholas Michael Ravnika – *Liberal elite media rag. SAD!*
Mark Young – *The Waitstaff of Mar-a-Largo*
Howard Yosha – *Stop Armageddon*
Andrew and Donora Rihn – *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*
Reshmi Dutt-Ballerstadt – *Extreme Vetting*
Michael Dickel – *Breakfast at the End of Capitalism*
Tom Hibbard – *Poems of Innocence and Guilt*
Eileen Tabios (ed.) – *Menopausal Hay(na)ku*
For P-Grubbers
Aileen Casinnetto – *Tweet*
Melinda Luisa de Jesús – *Defying Trumplandia*
Carol Dorf – *Some Years Ask*

Marthe Reed – *Data Primer*
Carol Dorf – *Some Years Ask*
Amy Bassin and Mark Blickley – *Weathered Reports: Trump
Surrogate Quotes From the Underground*
Nate Logan – *Post-Reel*
Jared Schickling – *Donald Trump and the Pocket Oracle*
Luisa A. Igloria – *Check & Balance*
Alik Barnstone – *So That They Shall Not Say, This Is Jezebel*
Geneva Chao – *post hope*
Thérèse Bachand – *Sanctuary*
Chuck Richardson – *Poesy for the Poetus. . . Our Donaldcito*
John M. Bellinger – *The Inaugural Poems*
Kath Abela Wilson – *The Owl Still Asking*
Ronald Mars Lintz – *Dumped Through*
Agnes Marton – *The Beast Turns Me Into a Tantrumbeast*
Melinda Luisa de Jesús – *Adios, Trumplandia!*
Magus Magnus – *Of Good Counsel*
Matina L. Stamatakis – *Shattered Window Espionage*
Steve Klepetar – *How Fascism Comes to America*
Bill Yarrow – *We All Saw It Coming*
Jim Leftwich – *Improvisations Against Propaganda*
Bill Lavender – *La Police*
Gary Hardaway – *November Odds*
James Robinson – *Burning Tide*
Eric Mohrman – *Prospectors*
Janine Harrison – *If We Were Birds*
Michael Vander Does – *We Are Not Going Away*
John Moore Williams – *The Milo Choir Sings Wild Boys in
Trumplandia*
Andrea Sloan Pink – *Prison and Other Ideas*
Stephen Russell – *Occupy the Inaugural*
James Robison – *Burning Tide*
Ron Czerwien – *A Ragged Tear Down the Middle of Our Flag*
Agnes Marton – *I'm the President, You Are Not*
Ali Znaidi – *Austere Lights*

Maryam Ala Amjadi – *Without Metaphors*
Kathleen S. Burgess – *Gardening with Wallace Stevens*
Jackie Oh – *Fahrenheit*
Gary Lundy – *at / with*
Haley Lasché – *Blood and Survivor*
Wendy Taylor Carlisle – *They Went to the Beach to Play*
Melinda Luisa de Jesús – *James Brown's Wig and Other Poems*

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