

Cry of Mindanao

Don PAGUSARA

Dis is Mindanao.
The promised land.
Land shriveled with scars of history,
Speckled with wounds of tyranny.
Hear her cry of pain and anger!

Dis is Mindanao.
Here, what are seeded are not dreams of life.
What abound on her valleys and plains
Are mounds of agony and death.
Here, the rivers murmur tales
Not of the gifts that spring
From the breasts of the earth,
But shredded clouds cascading down
The cheeks of mountains
From a million eyes.

Dis is Mindanao.
At sunset crimson sparks fly pell-mell to the sky,
To herald the black shrouds of night—and then,
From somewhere in the West, roaring sounds,
Fast crawling shadows like an avalanche
Of terror that shake the wounded land.

Dis is Mindanao.
No footmarks on the sand
That have kissed your soles, nor lips
Of leaves that have rubbed your skin
Would recount the images of fear and pain
You have witnessed and picturized. . .
Here locked-up mouths are held sacred,
Unuttered words are priced like gold.

Dis is Mindanao.
Unfathomed are the waters
Of the lakes and rivers of her history.
Don't gaze at your face on the surface
Of brooks and rivulets smeared
With bloodflows from the battlefields.
Afloat are poison tears of hate and revenge!
And don't try to sound the depths of her past
Lyricised in the songs and poetry of the *balyans*,
For your vision has been blurred by lies,
History has lost its value in your eyes.

Dis is Mindanao.
You have, by the sway of your dream,
By the long and far stretches of your eyes,
Fathomed and owned wide spaces of her lands,
Sliced her skin not by the blades of the plow
But by ripping gunfires and grenade shrapnels.
What utterances have you blown into the winds
So that the wounds of history might heal?
You have spewed flaming bits of lead
Sowing untold miseries and deaths
Upon the sons and daughters of the race, cradled
In endless struggles for freedom, justice and peace.

Dis is Mindanao.
No mystery enwraps its passing seasons,
But metaphors and imageries of countless
Actions in war zones and battlegrounds—
Bursting stones and rocks in the skies,
Blossoming petals of fire that burn the heart,
Scorch the souls of the Moro, Lumad
And Christian peoples.

Dis is Mindanao.
Come, Come into its parks, plazas and streets!
You will delight by the modern *moro-moro*,
Dancing fireworks and farcical shows
That veil the eyes and numb the senses of tourists.
Behold the plains, valleys and forestlands—
Sacred nooks and spaces of the sunblest island—,
Transformed into a garden of death and terror!

Dis is Mindanao.
Let us resound in song
Her screaming voice!
The cry of her dreams!
The shrill shouts of her struggles,,
The agony in the depths of her soul!

Dis is Mindanao.
The promised land.
Blest by the sun.
Speckled with bullet wounds
And scars of tyranny.