Ang librong ito ay pagmamay-ari ni:
Nilikha ang dilim noong simula,
pati araw, buwan, at mga tala.
Bawat isa ay espiritu o diwa,
sama-sama sa langit sa ibabaw ng lupa.

In the beginning, darkness came
along with spirits who weren’t the same:
there were the stars, the moon, and the sun.
In the skies above land lived each one.
Dahil halos lahat, hatid ay kinang, puno ng liwanag ang buong araw.
Si Aga ang diwang totoy ng liwanag.
Bughaw ang barong, hatid ay sinag.
Laging kasama si Alab, diwa ng araw,
apoy ang buhok at barong ay dilaw.

Apart from one, they all shone bright 
and so the day was filled with light.
As the spirit of light, Aga was known 
for his blue barong in which he shone.
With the spirit of the sun, he always came.
Alab, in a yellow barong, his hair aflame.

The spirit of the moon was a girl called Yumi who wore a baro’t saya, blazing white and lovely. Wherever she went, she brought with her a shining orb of faded silver. The many spirit stars were all aglow wearing the colors of the rainbow. Just as the world was filled with light, each man on earth was filled with delight. Farming and fishing always flourished with the light that was never extinguished. All the earth was ever happy without any reason to be gloomy. To Abba they offered praise and cheer. There was no terror. There was no fear.
Pero ibang-iba si Silim, diwa ng dilim, pati ang baro’t saya napakaaitim. Siya lamang ang kimi at tahimik, kasama ang libro, kuwago, at kuliglig. Pipi ang tukso ng mga diwa sa kanya, pero gusto pa rin niyang maging kaibigan sila.

But here was Silim, spirit of the dark. With her black baro’t saya, she stood apart. She was always alone, shy and quiet, spending time with her books, her owl, and her crickets. “Maybe she’s mute,” they teased to no end. But even so, she wanted to be friends.
Yaya ni Alab, “Maglaro tayo, tara!”
“Puwedeng sumali?” tanong ni Silim sa kanila.
“Bawal dito ang pipili!” hagikkitikan nila.
“Puwede, kung kaya mong—” sagot ni Aga.
At sabay-sabay pinakawalan, sari-saring salamangka:
bughaw, ginto, pilak, mula sa mga palad nila.

Alab calls out: “Come on, let’s play.”
“Mind if I join?” Silim would say.
“We don’t play with mutes,” they would snicker.
“Maybe, if you could—” Aga would tell her.
They released from their palms, altogether—
magical light of blue, gold, and silver.
Nag-aalangan man, sinubok ni Silim, pero ang salamangka niya ay kulay itim.
Tukso ni Aga, kasabay ang iba, “Prinsesa ng dilim!”
Malakas ang iyak, madaling umalis si Silim.

Silim took a shot. But just as she feared, the black of her magic was all that appeared.
“Princess of darkness!” they teased and they laughed.
With nothing but tears, Silim hurriedly left.
“Alaáng kuwago, bakít kaya ayaw nila sa akin? Dahil masaya sila, at iba akong malungkutin?”

Kaya kapangyarihan ay ginamit niya.
Pinintahan ang mukhang parang maskara.
Para makatulad ng mga gusto niyang kaibiganin,
malungkot na mukha’y ginawang masayahin.
Inilihim ang dilim at maitim na kasuotan,
at naging kasingdalisay ng kaliwanagan.

Bati ni Alab, “Ikaw ba yan, Silim?
Tulad ka na naming nagniningning!”

“Dear owl, my friend, why don’t they like me?
Because unlike them, I’m always unhappy?”

And so she put her powers to task,
painting her face just like a mask.
To be the same as the friends that she wanted
On her sorrowful face, a smile became planted.
She did away with her dark and black dress.
In its place she wore light and brightness.

“Is that you, Silim?” was Alab’s greeting.
“You’re like us now, shining and sparkling!”
Bilang patunay na siya'y tulad na nila, nilabanan ni Silim ang likas niyang salamangka. Dahan-dahang lumabas sa kanyang palad: hindi itim, kundi puting liwanag.

“Puwede na ba akong sumali?” tanong niya kahit na kinakapos ng hininga. “Sige, pero itaboy mo muna sila.” Sa kuliglig at kuwago nakaturo si Aga.

And to prove to them that she really belonged, she fought the magic that made her strong. Slowly but surely, from her palm shone a bright white light that was not her own.

“Can I join you now?” was Silim’s retort even though drained and her breath was short. “Sure, but first, get rid of your pets.” Aga was pointing at her owl and her crickets.
The blue spirit’s order, Silim did obey. 
She went and chased her poor friends away. 
Finally, Silim was part of the circle, 
her heart full of joy, her eyes full of twinkle.

But it didn’t take long. Soon, she was seeing that the white in her dress was slowly dimming. 
The paint on her face was merely a streak.
Little by little, she was growing weak.

Creating light made her strength eroded. 
So the darkness in her suddenly exploded!

Sinunod ni Silim ang bughaw na diwa at pinaglaho ang mga kawawang alaga. 
Dahil kabilang na siya sa mga diwa, si Silim ngayon ay tuwang-tuwa. 
Pero di nagtaagal, kanyang napapansin puting suot niya’y unti-unting nangingitim. 
Nabubura na rin ang pinta sa mukha. 
Nauubos ang lakas. Katawa’y nanghihina.

Nanlambot si Silim sa paglikha ng liwanag. 
At ang angking dilim ay biglang kumalat!
Umabot ang dilim hanggang sa mundo.
Natulog ang mga tao. Tumigil ang trabaho.
Bumalik si Silim sa tunay niyang anyo.
Kahit pinta sa mukha’y tuluyang naglaha.

To the earth below, her darkness crept.
Mankind grew tired. The whole world slept.
To her real appearance, Silim returned.
Her face unpainted, no longer adorned.
“Ano’ng ginawa mo? Kasalanan mo ito!”
Sunod-sunod ang mga diwa sa pagrereklamo.
Sigaw ni Aga, “May mabuti ka bang nagawa?
Kahit kailan man, talagang wala-wala!”

Itinaboy nila si Silim dahil sa kanilang gulat.
Nagtago si Silim sa makapal na ulap.
Sa mga dating alaga, patawad ay hiningi.
Kulilig at kuwago, kinaibigan siyang muli.

“This is your fault! What did you do?”
The spirits were soon complaining anew.
“What good have you ever really done?”
Aga shouted, “Really, there’s none!”

In their surprise, they cast her aside.
Behind dark clouds, Silim would hide.
Asking forgiveness from her former pets,
Silim reunited with her owl and crickets.
Meanwhile, the spirits put their minds together to get rid of all darkness forever and ever. As much as they could, they made their light brighten until all the earth thanked Abba again.

But then, the people for whom they were heroes were soon asking for the return of the shadows. The nonstop brightness became a pest to the weary workers who wanted to rest.
Habang si Silim, napag-isang nag-tisip sa sarili niyang lihim na sulok ng langit. “Wala ba akong lugar sa mundo? Mabuti nga siguro kung maglaho ako.”

Pero unti-unti, sa pañ-lassen lumigaya. Natanggap ni Silim ang sarili niya.

Meanwhile, Silim was thinking alone in a dark part of sky that was all her own. “If there is no place where I can belong, maybe it’s best that I just move on.”

Slowly, by herself; she became happy with who she was and what she could be.

But still, the spirits remained in a knot. The earth was parched and burning and hot. The unending light became a problem. Mankind cried out for Abba to save them. There was no rescue. There was no answer. This was a puzzle for the spirits to decipher.
Naalala ng mga diwa ang itinaboy na Silim at ang himbing na hatid nang angkin niyang dilim.
Tinanggap ng mga diwang nagkamali sila.
“Hanapin si Silim!” ang naging pasya.

The spirits then remembered the cast out Silim and the sleep that comes with the dark that she brings.
Humbled, they knew they made a mistake.
They agreed, “Find Silim, for mankind’s sake!”
Sa namumuong ulap na napakadilim, 
nataqpuan ng mga diwa ang nagtagong Silim.

Humingi ng tawad at nagpakumbaba 
kay Silim ang dating mayayabang na diwa. 
“Sinaktan ka namin,” kanilang simula. 
Sabi pa ni Aga, “Patawad sa panunuya.” 

“Akala namin, di ka namin kailangan. 
Pero hinahanap ka ng sangkatauhan.” 

Masama man ang loob, naintindihan ni Silim. 
Ngayo’y alam na niya ang kaya niyang gawin. 
Bumuhos ang luha sa binuksan niyang puso, 
a na pinuno ng tuwa ng kanilang pagkakasundo.
Sa gitna ng kanilang pagkakaisa,
doon dumating at nagpakita si Abba.
Binati sila ni Abba at iniwan ang utos:
maigaw rin sa lupa ng lamig at tulog.

Isang kalesa ang handog niya kay Silim,
tagapaghatid ng kalahating araw ng dilim.
Kasama niya sina Yumi at ang mga tala,
dala ang tanglaw nilang mga diwa.

It was then that Abba appeared to them,
to the spirits who were together again.
Abba reminded them of what they should do:
to bless the earth with rest and cold, too.

He gifted a carriage to the spirit Silim
for the half day of darkness that she would bring.
Yumi and the stars would ride it with her.
Their spirits would bring the dark sky some glimmer.
Sa mga diwa namang sina Aga’t Alab 
kalahati ring araw ang pagliwanag. 
Init at sinag ang ihahatid nila 
sa maghapon, tanghali, at umaga.

Sa pagtanggap sa dilim at sa sarili, 
nilikha nina Silim ang unang gabi. 
Doon siya hihintayin, habang tulog ang mundo, 
ger mga kaibigan niyang kuliglig at kuwago.

To Aga and Alab, whose spirits shone bright, 
the other half of day was theirs to light. 
Heat and shine are what they would bring 
to the afternoon, and noon, and the morning.

Because of the dark and self she accepted, 
with Silim, the first night was created. 
There, while the world is deep in slumber; 
her owl and her crickets will wait for her.
Mula bata pa siya ay nakahilagan na ni Mark Joseph Bacho na magbasa ng mga alamat, pabula, at mga kwentong mitolohiko kaya’t nangangarap siyang isabuhay ang karanasan ng lahiing kayumanggi sa pamamagitan din ng mga ito. Nagtapos siya ng BS Business Administration, Major in Marketing Management sa Polytechnic University of the Philippines.

“Silim, Prinsesa ng Dilim” ang kanyang unang aklat. Nakatira siya sa Pasig kasama ang kanyang mahiyaing pusang si Sam.


Ngayon, may sarili na siyang estilo sa tawag na “pop surrealist.” Nakalahok na siya sa maraming eksibisyon na loob at labas ng bansa. Noong Enero 2020 ang una niyang solo na eksibisyon sa isang museo, sa Katzen Arts Center, American University Museum sa Washington D.C.
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**CANA**

CANA, a non-profit organization, works with the creative community to promote children’s literacy, explore national identity, and broaden public awareness of Philippine art, culture, and the environment.
Pero ibang-iba si Silim, diwa ng dilim, pati ang baro’t sayang napakaitim. Siya lamang ang kimi at tahimik, kasama ang libro, kuwago, at kuliglig.

May tanong siyang kinikimkim: "Bakit kaya ayaw nila sa akin?"

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