A homeless man offers to sell me
A used C.D.
As I walk out the music chain
He says, C’mon, it’ll turn that frown
Upside down
(I’m no clown,
Mister).

In public school I learned
Textbook violence:
That Fridays bring out
The animal in people.
We’d thank G-d for no home-
Work, more, amplified
Mischief. To this very day

I anticipate that frown of mine
To appear out of nowhere
Like a coveted purchase
At the end of the week

The bum flashed
A wide grin
And in an instant
I was reminded:

A smile
May be a frown
Upside down

The beggar offers
Joy for free.
Says, It’ll cost you —
Everything. Sorry
Sir, I’m no clown.

Don’t pimp my love on holidays, either!
As the bellringer in the Joker suit freezes,
I can still hear Santa hoing down the street

All the way to the Bank.
Eliyahu Enriquez is the author of G\(\text{Y}\)C\(\text{M}\)P (Chipmunka Publishing, 2009). He first received Honorable Mention in Fordham University at Lincoln Center’s Robert Nettleton/Uly Hirsh Poetry Prize for his poem, \textit{Fu}. Since then, he has worked in the Editorial Departments of \textit{A Gathering of the Tribes}, \textit{The Asian American Writers’ Workshop}, \textit{Persimmon: Asian Literature, Arts, and Culture}, as well as Creative Writing Instructor for The Philippine American Center. He was the Featured Playwright at The Consulate General of the Philippines — New York and \textit{AAWW} with selected readings from \textit{The Playground Trilogy} (\textit{Flipsiders}, \textit{Salvaged}, and \textit{Pearl’s Kaddish}). Publications include Blackmail Press, \textit{Generationrice}, \textit{MaARTe}, \textit{Poeticmindset}, \textit{Zeek: A Jewish Journal of Thought and Culture}, as well as a a chapbook, \textit{Heaven is a Country}. He also has a short film, \textit{Comfort Room} currently in post-production. Eliyahu’s follow-up volume of \textit{Pin@y Piyyutim}, Critical Mass is forthcoming.

### Akhdut

I attended two funerals today  
I did not bother to bring an umbrella  
Or flower  
Or Bible  
Or date  
A few others did  
A few  
We are divided by denominations  
We are divided by languages  
We are divided by customs  
We are divided by cultures  
We are divided by politics  
We are divided by nations  
We are divided by names  
Our colors are life and death  
We have been given two shades  
One much deeper than the other  
YHVH has no signature color  
If people who need  
People do not come together  
He will surely bind us  
In common danger

### Sea of Bamboo

“Efrayim joins the wind and chases the east wind” — Hoshea 12:2

Asian trees bear strange fruit  
Blood on the reeds and blood at the Rut  
Brown bellies swaying in the Eastern Breeze  
Strange brood swinging from the Cypress trees  

Junglist scene of the Bamboo south  
The slanted eyes and the razor mouth  
Cent of rice terraces, sticky and fresh  
Then the sudden stink of burning flesh  

Here are Prutas for Paro to pluck  
For the rain to wash, for the wind to suck  
For Thy Sons to spoil, for Dragons to drop  
Here is the strange and bitter crop: