**Helene**

Vicente Handa, September 28

I peep through a window slit

And see the lash and slash of your wrath.

Your swish, swash, and swoosh of the wild wind

Keep boughs swaying, leaves shaking,

Branches bending, trunks breaking, and roots uprooting.

You howl like a wild wolf in heat, haunting, threatening.

Yet, I get back to my bed, curl like a child

In a mother’s bosom.

I survived Undang, Ruping, Frank, Yolanda, and Bising.

I saw, felt, and lived worst than your fury:

A house shaking, roof flying, widows smashing;

Mountains, barren and brown, bereft

Of anything green—

Trees, plants, including coco pests, all gone;

The entire city or town flooding;

Bridges collapsing;

Water rising from the sole of the feet,

To the knees, waistline;

Houses drowning under the deluge of dirt and mud;

And no electricity— not just for days but weeks.

While FB friends have posted the water

Reaching on their basement,

A flooded street,

A muddy yard,

A tree falling on a car

Or onto a neighbor’s house,

A blackout— a few minutes or an hour, two, three, four, Five, or six to others—

Here I am, curling in my bed

Unafraid, at peace,

Praying the words of safety for everyone,

Thanking for the warm bed, house unshaken,

And some food in the fridge.

Tomorrow, when the sun comes back,

I will remove the debris in the yard

Wash mud on the pavement, clean the car,

And move forward as if you did not come.