

When I wasn't with Linda,
she used to live in some foreign
place--- I don't know, Brussels?
Yes. Brussels. With her father
and her three sisters.

They all knit in a flag shop,
she said. Of all things.
Yes, flags, she affirmed.
Flags. And they had to be
exact. I understand, I told her,
I didn't even know they could
be knit. Well,

besides the shop, there were
green fields, stone steps, oceans...
pâtisseries, plages, et vie. Vie?
Life. I had a boy once. My first,
she said. She touched her stomach.
I took a roll. Our friends watched

her hands. Were you in love?
Of course I was, she said,
But you know I love you, Raymond.
She leaned over and whispered French.
she gave me a kiss. My baby, she said.
She held my face. She let go.

It's alright, go on. I rose
a hand and the waiter came
and refilled their glasses. No more
for me, thank you, and I pushed
my glass back. I watched her.

Oh, but he was difficult.
Tell them. Yes, Charles, my
first husband, he drank.
He was a friend of her
father's. He inherited
his father's bar and they lived
right on top of it, his personal
tap close by, Jesus.

It was bearable for awhile,
she said. He was romantic.
At night, even if he weren't
sober, he would hold me this way.
She locked her arms around herself.
He called me la lune, les étoiles.

He loved me, she said.

Of course. But the baby, she let go,
it died inside of me. I put my hand
on her chair. And he drank, and
he drank. He didn't talk, he didn't
eat, he didn't sleep. And, one day,
God, he had enough. The poor bastard
walked into the ocean. People saw
him do it too, his friends,
his family. They didn't stop him.
The ocean, God, they were crazy!

God, I said. I went crazy after that.
I was so angry.

You know I love you Eric Tuazon

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Eric Tuazon is a writer from Los Angeles. His short stories and poems have appeared in several publications such as *The Alaskan Quarterly*, *Berkeley Poetry Review*, *The Northridge Review*, *Ploughshares*, and *Poetry*. His poetry has been praised and criticized for its story and character driven style, often dancing dangerously between the lines of prose and poetry through the constant use of allegory and literary allusions. His first collection of poetry, *Happy Bivouac*, is due out at the end of 2013.

