

**scents of my mother**

*for nana, hu guaiya hao*

drugstore lotion

cheap imported cigarettes

grief

flores m<sup>1</sup>

a pot of white rice

anger

instant coffee

bleach

a 6-pack of bud, “the premier beer of the mariana islands since 1949”

boxed curry sauce mix

lipstick, in deep red

yellowed vinegar pickled mango love

boonie<sup>2</sup> peppers

trash burning out back

anxiety

eyeliner shavings

fuetsan yan mamuti<sup>3</sup>

five maternity wards

blood-milk

typhoon season

the space between the equator and the tropic of cancer

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1 Chamoru for plumeria.

2 U.S. English slang for boondocks, the sticks, or the middle of nowhere. Since the WWII militarization of the Mariana Islands by the United States, the word boonie has been ironically adopted by Chamoru peoples to describe our island jungles. As we have a strong, genealogical sense of place, and historical and contemporary relationships with our neighboring Indigenous Pacific Islander peoples, Chamorus don't literally believe that our lands are "the middle of nowhere"—an otherwise deeply racist, colonial worldview that European and U.S. American imperial powers expressed about Oceania and her islands.

3 Chamoru for strength and pained muscles.