

**what is literacy under 30%**

Resent the brake

not working in the snow,  
just believing, believing without.  
The language divide maps our Christmas table clean—  
Fale com clareza! Fala, filha! Fala! No,  
I have the moon sooner than the sun  
on this cold coast. That is why  
we are so angry here, we don't need  
to count stories if we do not  
tell them, if our mouths freeze shut  
before a breath of trying. I try to think  
of myself better than the Bible stories  
bound to the other end of the table,  
but I've walked into the annex full of dresses  
and found myself embarrassed, all over  
what I could not say. Regardless,  
a butch in a dress is funny, the Bible begins  
with Genesis. The dresses are all  
so beautiful, & I would've been quite beautiful  
in them, that is the crying, the beautiful.  
Tia and I, naked and staring at each other  
over the boiled humble bacalhau,  
I wonder what we could've read together  
if she was ever allowed to be anything but.

I drive us home praying.