

excerpt from "Poet Laureate of This Costco" by Andrew Chi Keong Yim

It is both on-brand and honest
for me to call this gray warehouse
the most beautiful thing for miles.

I mean aisles.

Rows of bulk to clean and feed your family.

I go looking for something
and I find it

but it's way too heavy
to try to carry home.

An Almond Roca melts forever in my gongong's jacket pocket.
All summer since Popo died.

In moments of personal and national catastrophe, it is my job to tweet:
"Catch me crunching croissants at a crossroads."

I am not on Twitter.
I am stacking glossy boxes in a cart with one bum wheel.

I am examining assorted shrink-wrapped muffins.
These muffins are Asian American cuisine.
Especially the double chocolate.

I am testing Kirkland socks for hand-feel.
These are Asian American socks.

In 1942, Isamu Noguchi drives himself into the desert of his own volition.
He is not allowed to leave.

This is an Asian America story.

Costco Iwilei is the busiest Costco in the nation, an Asian American fact.
Its pizza is the best pizza in Hawaii, but the bar is low.

Yes, I will sample anything in a small enough cup.

Where there is need
there is devotion.

I was raised a short walk away. I've taken dates to this food court.
In Queens, I am never far.

On bad days, the gas lines stretched further away than my mother's apartment.

No ocean in sight.

It was my job to push the cart.

I have history.

It's so nice to have a place.