

Milk and Alcohol, by Mark Romero

*Original sonnets on common Asian conditions: lactose intolerance and alcohol flush reaction
Presented at APAMSA x SAMSA x LMSA Cultural Extravaganza 2025*

Milk

Have you heard of the Asian threat of milk?
Half of us cower in fear of dairy.
It makes our bowels move smoother than silk -
Lactose intolerance is so scary.

Growing up, my fridge had only Lactaid;
Preschool, I drank real milk for the first time.
My pants were shat, so Mom came to my aid -
Traumatized, I was silent as a mime.

As babies, we rise by drinking mom's milk;
As Asians, we fall by drinking lactose.
This is the curse bestowed upon our ilk;
To shed light on it, I speak now - verbose.

Milk gives and it takes - a double-edged sword;
The Asian stomach meets tragic discord.

Alcohol

We all have that one Asian friend who glows.
One drink - radiantly red turns his skin.
His intake of alcohol simply shows.
His light reflects off of his beer can's tin.

Aldehyde dehydrogenase lacking,
His cheeks flush, now rosier than rosy.
This glow - among Asians, a common thing -
Concerning in looks - yet feeling cozy.

Ruby red - he's as warm as he appears.
Worry not though: he is not on fire.
He's seen this in Dad and Gramps through the years.
This is really a state he desires.

So here's an ode to the Asians who glow.
Use it to educate your white friend Joe.