POI MOUTH

No‘u Revilla

“poi mouth” is a sonnet dedicated to ‘Ōiwi lesbians and wāhine who love wāhine. May we continue to aloha and feed each other well. E mālama ‘ono.

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you walked one river for days no ka mea
the right stone is worth it. because i sound
like that river when the stone is reborn
a poi pounder and your thumbs pohole
my skin. please, face me east to the stomach-
climbing sun. we lepo, huli, wetness.
we kū a mokumoku. the god of
sour adorns the land of hā. knead me
on the low papa made slick with your hands.
who rules who? you tell me that lineage
quivers. two fingers swirl clockwise while i
crust your open lips. *wipe nothing away.*

poi mouth is mōʻī mouth. rise and kiss me.
eia au, your sticky makamaka.

About the Author



Noʻu Revilla is an ʻŌiwi poet and educator. Born and raised on the island of Maui, she prioritizes aloha, gratitude, and collaboration in her practice. She is the author of *ASK THE BRINDLED*, a National Poetry Series selection and winner of the Balcones Prize. Her work has appeared in journals and magazines such as *World Literature Today, Michigan Quarterly Review, Lit Hub, Split This Rock*, and elsewhere. She is an associate professor at the University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa and lives with her wife on Oʻahu.