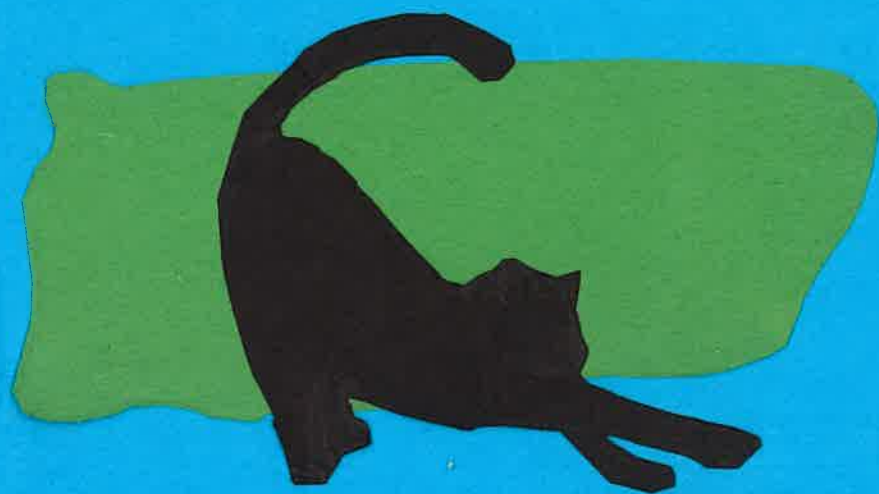
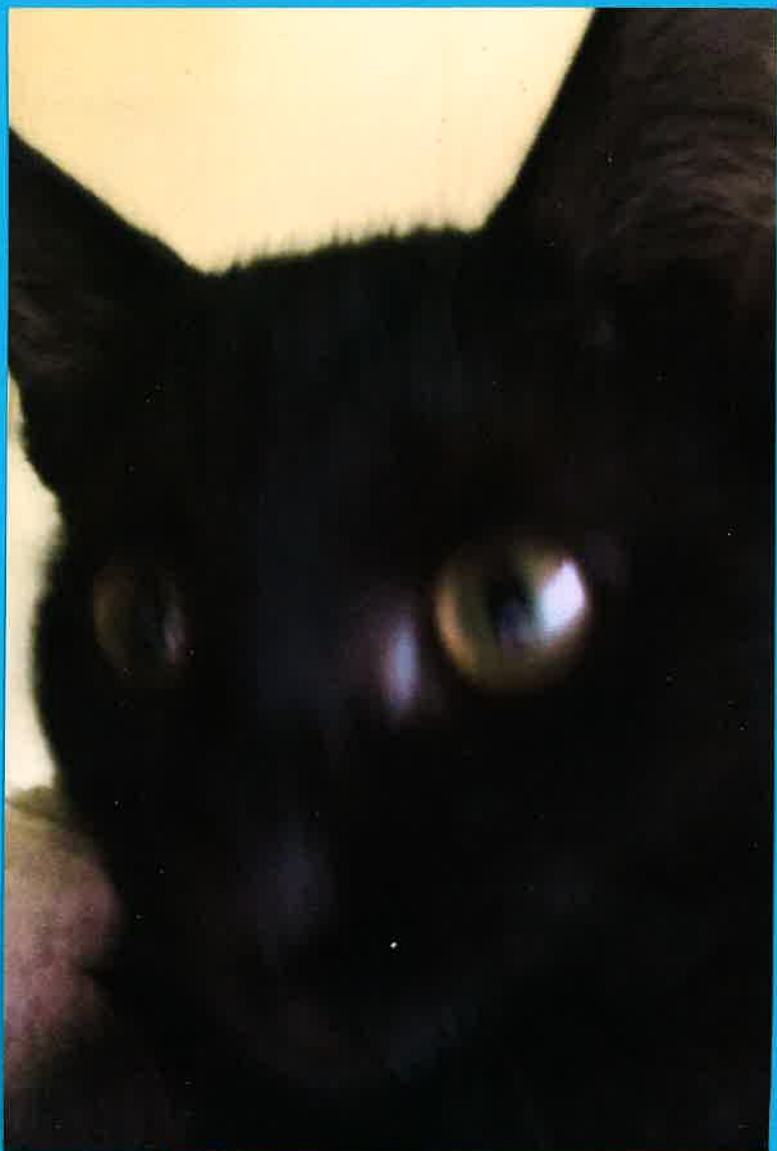


# SATOS



PUERTO RICO, ITS STRAY ANIMALS,  
CLASS, AND NEOCOLONIALISM



Example of a *Santo*: Boris the cat. Photo taken by Eduardo Santos.

**SATO:** A WORD USED EXCLUSIVELY IN PUERTO RICO REFERRING TO THE ISLAND'S STRAY CATS AND DOGS, USUALLY AFFECTIONATELY. CAN MEAN "MUTT" "MIXED BREED"



IN 2018, THE UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO DID ITS FIRST ESTIMATED CENSUS OF SATOS. THEY FOUND 300,000 DOGS AND 1,000,000 CATS.

THERE HAVE BEEN EFFORTS TO CURTAIL THE POPULATION, BUT MANY REMAIN. THE QUESTION NOW IS: WHY ARE THERE SO MANY?

THERE ARE MANY NONPROFITS DEDICATED TO SPAYING, NEUTERING, RESCUING AND ADOPTING SATOS.

BUT LITTLE HELP COMES FROM THE GOVERNMENT.

THEY HAVE OTHER PRIORITIES.

HURRICANE MARIA HIT THE ISLAND IN 2017. THERE WERE MASSIVE SHORTAGES IN EVERYTHING FROM FOOD TO POWER.

THE DEATH TOLL IS CONTESTED, BUT AT LEAST 3,000 PEOPLE DIED.

YEARS AFTER, REBUILDING ISN'T FINISHED. THE PRIVATIZATION OF THE POWER GRID HAS EXACERBATED THE PROBLEMS.

PUERTO RICO IS CURRENTLY 74 BILLION DOLLARS IN DEBT - AND UNABLE TO GO BANKRUPT DUE TO ~~THE~~ CHAP. 9, TITLE II OF THE US CODE. PROMESA OR "LA JUNTA" WAS ESTABLISHED BY CONGRESS AS AN OVERSIGHT BOARD. IN ORDER TO PAY THE DEBT, THEY CUT SOCIAL SERVICES, PENSIONS, AND EDUCATION.

THIS HAS BEEN ADDING TO THE POPULATION CRISIS. IN 2000 THERE WERE 3,668,960 PEOPLE ON THE ISLAND. NOW THERE ARE 2,755,482.

THERE'S NOT MANY RESOURCES LEFT FOR THE SATOS OF THE ISLAND.



Back at the states, we planned to give Boris to Petsmart, but ended up keeping him.

If he had gone to petsmart, he probably would have gotten adopted quickly. Kittens mostly do. When we had called our petsmart before, in Puerto Rico, for what to do on Boris they said "kittens don't get adopted in Puerto Rico."

DRGS.

FOR SATOS!

The Sato Project

Love4satos

Save the Satos

Save a Sato

All Sato Rescue

Animal Lighthouse Rescue

Getting to the point of Boris being in the States was a long and complicated road, exacerbated by the island's problems and inequalities. He nearly was another of the 1,000,000 sato cats on the island of Puerto Rico.

My Parents are fond of him, treating him like another Puerto Rican immigrant, like them.



NOTABLE MOMENTS:

• The non-existent Petsmart

• ~~roaches~~ roaches

• My Abuela's tomb was moved, and nobody told us.

• Boris got stuck in the couch.

• The line for the good meat was too long!!

• Everyone thought I was born a man and called me "Hijo!!"



¡Que Puer to Priquetto!  
 Es bien Sato.  
 He's acts just like a  
 Puerto Rican Kid!  
 ¡Que Sato!



My parents are fond  
 of Boris

The way they talk about him in relation to the word "Sato" itself is interesting. They say he's very sato, he acts very sato. Boris to them acts crazy, like a street cat. My parents imply he is clever and shifty, a true survivalist. They ~~imply~~ <sup>say</sup> he is "mixed" or a "muff", and unequivocally Puerto Rican. A lot is in a word.

This word isn't just used for animals.



Class is  
 important in  
 Puerto Rico.

Lineage is  
 important.

There are clear cut  
 lines

Those with money  
 versus those  
 without.

And for many,  
 whose skin  
 is lighter.

My mother calls my father "sato" often.



My mother's family is, or at least was high class



My Great grand father was rumored to be darkskinned and from the canary islands.

My relative who married him was disinherited.



They can trace their lineage all the way to aristocats' in Spain



I have a great uncle who was mayor of Lares. He has a school named after him. Mom's family held power.



If you go through all of my last names (father's then mother's, and so on for each generation) you'll get to 'Araña Araña'. This means two people with that last name married each other.



My mother's father married up. He was poor, but he was white, and he was from Lares: top. (Town in mountains. It wasn't very big though...)

My mom said they married cousins to keep the line "pure" i.e. white and illegitimate.



# My father's family is very different.



"My family is full of Bastards." He told me "We're quite tragic." He was lower class than my mom.



My Grandmother was a bastard. She had her mother's last name. The only rich relative she had gambled the money away.



My Grandfather was what "sato" means when referred to people on the island. "Player; going from woman to woman!"



My Great Grandfather was known as "Don Eduardo" for being a good man. His twin sister died at birth.



As told by my father, his side of the family had many "bad deaths"! Chorea, tuberculosis, cirrhosis, suicide.



I have indigneous Great Grandparents. But not much is known about them.



A bastard great uncle was passed as the son of his Abuela.

Even according to my parents ancestry.com results, my father is undoubtedly more mixed. My mother has far more european blood, in far higher percentages, than dad.

His 1% 's and ancestry goes on and on.

My father's family, same as many on puerto rico, was marred by scandal, rumor, and the failure to obtain wealth. My parents don't seem to realize that many of problems papi's family has is from generations of racism and classism, and colonialism.

Meanwhile, many people can't believe my mother is hispanic. "You're too white," they say.

"Sato" isn't usually used in the context of people. It's used as a negative remark about someone who is a womanizer. But there's always implications. Womanizing leads to illegitimate children, either invisible or vaguely pitied. My mom talks about them much the same way she talks about the animal satos.

"Que Sato! How smart and clever. He knows how to survive." "Pobrecitos."

Boris, the sato cat, is the only one to have a ~~connection~~ <sup>relationship</sup> to my dad.

I think Boris and my dad feel  
connected that way.



• ~~Victims~~ Victims of systems much larger than  
themselves.