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Fat Mayas

Mila D. Aguilar

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So, at the day's end,
I'm her lamplighter on her silent asteroid,
among books, papers, rubble of chalk.
I close the gate behind me as I stride out,
making sure I hear the lock's tiny click.
I follow strictly her instructions.
Down her street the street lamps cast
my shadow ahead. Crickets in the bushes
whirr according to their nature.
In the same order, the sun too will rise
tomorrow, and I shall be back.

MILA D. AGUILAR

Fat Mayas

In D.C., in front of the Jefferson Building
While taking my snack,
I saw a small bird, much like
A fat maya, alone.

In the Philippines,
I mused to myself,
Mayas come in flocks,
Merrily.

Here they are fatter;
Still brown, after having
Earned some black,
But much less

Lithe than
Where they come from.
And they are
Called something else,

I'm sure.
And then they do not
Flock, as they do in
Their native land.

In the succeeding days
I would see one more per day,
Still alone, flying unto
Gutters and eaves.

How I grieved for them,
Full as they were
With the abundance
Of a foreign land.

(23 May 1999)

ROMULO P. BAQUIRAN JR.

Anghel ng Kalayaan

Mahirap-hirap lang ang patungo roon:
sakay sa talampakan ng sariling paa;
. . . magpapahatid sa hangin.

—Zelda Soriano

I. Lumapag ang Anghel sa Umasam na Malay

Lumapag sa malay mo ang anghel ng kalayaan:
ang maningning na mukha'y bumighani sa pagkatao mo;
tinitigan niya ang naroong taliba ng pag-aalinlangan
at pinalayas ang pagkatiwalag mo sa katotohanan.
Hinawi niya ang tabing ng kawalang pag-asa
at pinasulong ka kasama ng mga pusong
umaasam sa kaniyang apoy na magpapaliyab
sa pagmamahal sa kapuwa at sa bayan.