

philippine studies

Ateneo de Manila University · Loyola Heights, Quezon City · 1108 Philippines

Milkstone Mountain Afternoon

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Philippine Studies vol. 43, no. 3 (1995): 506–508

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Fri June 27 13:30:20 2008

Pulotgata

Sa labas, dinidilaan
ng ulan ang mga puno.
Ang hangin ay bumubulong
Sa tainga ng mga dahon

Habang

nakaupo ka sa akin.
Ang pilik ng iyong mata'y
pumipikit, bumubukas.

Makintab ang pawis
sa paligid ng iyong labi.
Lampara
ang iyong mukha.

At ang iyong mga daliri'y
naglalakbay, pumapasok,
nawawala
sa mga ulan ng aking buhok.

DM. REYES

Milkstone

Randy brings me a stone
from the gray Antique shore,
the seagreen stretch
of his Monday walk,
untended by the dogs
growling on his way to work.

And the milkstone glows,
an egg-shaped mold
of cream and swirled
grays, a thin crack
on its cheek, like a near-
perfect cake baked
on the griddle.

In my poem,
the stone is anything
my heart would
allow it to be:

feathers of a wandered
petrel, asleep on the sand
one day before the Flood

or a pair of red lobsters
that followed San Francisco
in the *capriccioso* of his praise,

even the crumbled shell
of blugreen salamanders,

hatched many years ago,
shaped and hardened
by the pure light.

Yesterday, Randy picked
stones on the foggy shore,
claiming nameless gems
in his hands.

I place his gift beside
one folded paper crane,
whose wings I have
gently opened for some-
one's love.

The crane sings my wish,
once grass blades arching
in the July lightning and rain.

The aquamarine wings
borrow their magic from
the sea and the fierce
ray of a sunburst,
from the gray hills
of the monsoon night.

In my begging bowl,
a pilgrim's stone, a lover's
crane, picked or folded
from the worn earth,
keeping what could be
poem, what could be love.

Mountain Afternoon

. . . for in this world
everything is pardoned in advance.

—Milan Kundera

The Unbearable Lightness of Being

In the noon
Of these mountains,
When the light is white
And does not lie,
The eyes waken without shade
To both loss and leaving:

Leaves of the bamboo
Swirling the light gold,
Nipped by the wind,
The white passing
Of clouds
And the flight of dust
Rising to sweep through
The slopes of hills.

In this swift
Departure of things,
It is for the eyes
To imagine:

Dust collecting
On blades of tall grass,
Green and slender,
Clouds dissolving
To reveal ferns
And orchids blooming

On the hardness
 Of sky shoulders,
 And yellow leaves,
 Sailing on rain water.

If these eyes trust
 That dust, clouds, and leaves
 Are brought to places
 Of safe keeping,
 So can ears
 Begin to hear the wonder
 Of an angel's wings
 In the blowing wind—
 Dream in the haste
 Of its racing—
 Waiting for the angel
 That will hum the heat
 Of all these hills
 Away.

And should those eyes
 Really learn
 To stare, then,
 In the name
 Of these mountains,
 Even such madness will
 Be forgiven.

BENILDA SANTOS

Ang Magsasampagita

Wari siya
 tinagpas na bugambilyang sakitin
 sa pagkakatayo sa makapal na ulan.
 Kupas na luntian
 ang mga dahon sa kanyang damit.