Christian Jil R. Benitez

Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines

Weathering

& then the wind, as if all along, I've been sleeping beside a cliff, whistling me in, & through, the withoutness of which greets me like sunlight. The harshness of it as if in stillness one finally unlearns & learns again how to hear the rocks. The rocks in their hoarsest of voice. The rocks in their hoarsest of voice. Nothing much left to be said now on doubts, this is true, though this can also be just as wrong. Hasn't the sand taught us enough regarding thirst. Hasn't the moss, after all, persisted regardless of luck. Perhaps time does leak but less like water. Perhaps it was my ears that have been torn off. All these epiphanies are but a prayer too, like knees & palms on roughest of earth, like how salt is simply stone we have been trained in time to swallow. Or were they the tears of few birds, only we have forgotten their most impossible names. Did they even bother to leave us gifts of feathers. & what again of the wind, as if all along we've been sleeping with the wrongest forms of sleep. Perhaps we have been

too honest to ask away, so say I just go, & lick

your feet, claim each dirt as something I've been praying for, & love, I'd wager, would still have barely anything for us to reveal—except, maybe, unsteadiness of faith, uselessness of its implications, rage barren as canyons, hollowed of what is not there anymore in certain slants of light. Or just as when you finally rest your palms on my chest, & understand the years humming so ahead of us we'd already be dead as dust: Have you really seen anything you have yet to see. Isn't a mirage but the same desert insisting to be seen. & how is what we feel no different from a boulder being itself on the face of weathering. Isn't this all just the wind being wind: as if all along you've been sleeping beside me & how truthfully, it does not matter anyway, or no, at least, not that much. No honey must spurt out the rock. Everything's beside the cliff now, & yet, in another life, it may have all meant for us abundance
