

Superhero

Paolo Tiausas

Translation by author

The history of men is a history of mistakes,
intended or otherwise. You can walk EDSA
through the sixties, you'll still land in 2020
with shadow-boils punctuating your skin.
Not to say much about war, nor the comet
and its apocalypse foretold a dozen times,
nor the serial killer prowling the villages
back when lamp posts sheltered no cameras
so the dark was always dark, nor luck and
lack of it in the razed forest, nor the skeleton
picked clean by the sick wolf disguised and
staked out in the priest's unarrayed mind,
nor the union president coming home to fire
spelling out his family's verses in smoke,
nor the waterproof transistor radio cast
into the ocean now singing within reach of
the earth's core. Forever and always, we men
the weeds with no respect for gravel nor cement.
As if the universe corrupted itself, a made-up
tale of a made-up god choosing the chief element
to suffer, as hunger to animal, as word to forget,
any thing ordered becomes not when men are,
when men desire any somewhere, there, any here,
not to say much about our history's heroes,
the teachers, the superpowers, it's only fair
to want what's real, with cushy seats and beds,
with power to dislike diminish dismiss
in the name of being the smart one, the one
with the PhD, the one with most humanity,
it's power to bomb those harboring the enemy,
not to say much about children punctuated

by collapsing ceilings, while, in some hospital
a man celebrates for the last time his fatherhood,
then betrays a mother and a wife, again,
then drinks to the high of this utter fate,
then finds next all families, all tribes, ancestors,
all children who grow old alone, the men hurt
with a hurt as one orphaned by original dust.
Even if you walk backwards the lost decades
and you meet all the dead myths and pilgrims,
one foot will keep overtaking the other,
this curse just knows: a history of mistakes
makes a history of men, intended. Otherwise.

From *outlive poems*

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