

Poetry

# Habagat

by March Abuyuan-Llanes

My hair is wet  
and wrapped in your old t-shirt  
when I rinse these stalks  
of saluyot in my hand. Wet  
when I pick at each leaf between  
my thumb and forefinger, and lay  
them all in the strainer. Wet  
when I wait by the stove for the water  
to boil, and wetter  
than my sweating nape when I wait  
for the steam to swallow  
the dark leaves in its hot  
smothering breath. I look out  
and the rain tells me you cannot  
come again before you  
do, so I eat dinner  
alone: the fish and saluyot slick  
with its own spit in my mouth  
while I listen to the typhoon begging  
to enter. The windows  
are closed but everything is so  
wet: my hands  
after washing the dishes, the cold sheets  
on our unmade bed, and my hair  
I've let down, somehow still dripping  
down my back and painting  
the drenched shadow of

you all over  
my pillows, that soaked  
shirt of yours left  
on the floor.

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