

Green Humanities: A Journal of Ecological Thought in Literature, Philosophy & the Arts

Volume 4 *Eco-Justice*

Article 10

2024

In the Doha International Airport, a forest

Paulina Bianca Ocampo
KU Leuven

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/gh>



Part of the [Critical and Cultural Studies Commons](#), [Environmental Studies Commons](#), and the [Folklore Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Ocampo, Paulina Bianca. "In the Doha International Airport, a forest." *Green Humanities: A Journal of Ecological Thought in Literature, Philosophy & the Arts*, vol. 4, 2024 . DOI: 10.25779/7dny-ay77

This Poem is brought to you for free and open access by ODU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Green Humanities: A Journal of Ecological Thought in Literature, Philosophy & the Arts* by an authorized editor of ODU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@odu.edu.

In the Doha International Airport, a forest

Cover Page Footnote

Note: The tikbalang and the tiktik are popular creatures from Filipino folklore. The tikbalang is a half-horse humanoid creature with a horse-like upperbody. The tiktik is a creature that harvests human organs while a victim sleeps. It is said that if you hear continuous tiktik sounds, a tiktik is nearby.

In the Doha International Airport, a forest

Our kind, my lola says, are born with a piece of
forest, wild growths hidden under our tongues
during inspections: of prodding canes, of bayonet
Passed to you, she says, who knows not of war
trees do not grow like this anymore. Ingat, she says
Some try to enter if the tikbalang does scare them,
if the beckoning of the tiktik escapes notice
The signal breaks over the video call *tik tik*
From a humid home in the hills of Antipolo
tik...tik
To a gas-heated dorm in a cobblestoned city
Ingat, she says. Some may covet your forest
Rich with hardy trunks and supple vines that nurse
that build, that engineer, that care, that clean
that serve your coffee in the Doha International Airport
before you offer your own forest to whoever'll take it
–the *tikbalang* now works the fields, The tiktik trills,
changing form – takes purchase of branches for its nest
tiktiktiktik
I learn in class that trees sometimes send caution
through the same networks – sensing, sending
messages of love and safety in between
water and nutrients, over distance, and break
ing signals to another piece of forest in
a gas-heated dorm in a cobblestoned city, relayed
to the forest behind the espresso machine
in the Doha International Airport – *ingat*
dew falls. A forest grows