

Pilgrims

By Jacob Shores-Argüello

Costa Rica

The bus arrives in the orchid heat,
in the place where coffee grows
like rubies in the valley's black soil.
We disembark, walk in twos so we
don't slip on the genesis mud.
The woman next to me carries
three cellphones as gifts for cousins
and a bucket of chicken to share.
How is it that I have come this far
with nothing, that I am empty-
handed in this country of blessings?
A procession of rust-colored macaws
glides above us. Their ashy shadows
draw crosses onto all of our heads.