

PRAYER CAVE IN BAHIA

Follow those stones
discreetly placed in an arc
up to the cave.
This hollow in the rocky coast
is the Spirit's house.
Walk the saint's ground in bare feet.
Bow to enter this fierce, raw
holiness:
miniature statues, mementoes,
flowers, popcorn, sweets,
secret petitions in tightly folded white notes
left on the altar.
Humble temple –
air inside thick with scent of algae
and incense.
Add a candle to the flames already alight.
Remember the old ones.
Give thanks, give thanks.

Descend the curved path
without turning your back to Spirit.
At the stones' end,
turn, face the sea,
fly away on the breeze.

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