

“Planting”

“Time is longer than rope.” — Jamaican proverb

Nights, fog comes in low,
peeling off the ocean's face
like a serpent shedding skin.

In the garden, nothing will grow.
My mother and I
plant cassava, cocoa, and yam.

Under the sun we toil.
At dusk we listen and wait.
But the soil is watered with salt.

And when sea frost
comes in with the tide,
again, our work is undone.

Granny says the land's memory
is long. And a land that knew terror
will yield no fruit.