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Los Baños Interlude I

Los Baños Interlude II

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Los Baños Interlude I

Perhaps tonight, then nothing more.
The months move about,
swinging their fists in the air,
the gradual chill that stirs the leaves
out of their stupor, a sleep that lasts
a thousand years.

She sits by the window, looks out
and exclaims; "the world always turns gray
at this time of day. . . .
and to have once thought that only
our words could save us."

Los Baños Interlude II

The rain, like the beer in the run-down
sari-sari store, is warm. School children,
siblings of a lost generation, trace their way
home through the mud-filled roads.

Her name is Juana, *ang babaeng pinaglihi sa kangaroo*,
and they're off to see her at the carnival,
one peso per head. On the side, you can win
a can of pork and beans in a game of *beto-beto*.

Is this all there is to say about a town
famous for *buko* pie and *espasol*, and the hot springs
languishing with the dust of transients and tourists,
the memories of old people afflicted with rheumatism
and nostalgia?

Ah, but there is still Maria Makiling, whose breasts
are gathered up by the fog, pregnant by the warm
rain and the blood of rebels who never came down.