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Los Baños Interlude I **Los Baños Interlude II**

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JUANIYO ARCELLANA

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.