

Two Photographs in Siesta

Rhonda Morrison

Pots line the stucco walkway, sunburnt flowers
squat and curl like a seventeenth-century
still life,
and bow to the simmer of mortality.
A small space to admit air,
the lazy squire of out and in
cut into the corridor
of clay air
Is the sixth hour.

She sits on the step spreading limbs in disarray—
messy as morning.
Her eyes are brown fringe, shadows a V
on her heavy cheeks. A mole, looks drawn, plumped on
top of her knee
which is bent and crushed, calf to thigh,
ankle over foot, hand over hand, arms
a triangle around one half of her body.

In half shade are two photos, one
a mother in love with her child
at body temperature,
rubbing his head and warm breath her own;
fingers absently tangled
through a silky diction,
The youth of her own.
The other hand around his waist
carelessly, yet holding the body together
in a soft cross of protection.

Two is Mezo at the Fabada, "the alley of the kiss," her black
hair hanging between them like Baja, their fingers
a river diverted
into each other.
Whereabouts unknown.

But night is coming soon, tapered and lit,
hidden in a cave
like the Virgin Mary.
Night is better, they will be hungry, stupid,
drunk and tangled in their own past.
The smell of pig and rum will make her forget
hers.