

Cabo Rojo

By Vincent Toro

The landscape

Strewn with hammocks

Rocking chairs

Decorating otherwise

Untamed Flamboyans

Maybe a radio

Static accenting

A clave or

An old oxcart

Combed over with weeds

Sticks rising from

Patches in the backyard to

Mark where the

Cana has been buried

Stillness exalted

On the bay where

There is motion only

When a glass

Runs empty

A bladder is full

A fishing rod twitches
The air is a syrup
Poured over skin
Subtle and conspicuous is
The sound of a Labrador
Pawing the sand
The hills go unmentioned
Maybe like a Chagall
Unfinished
The time is given to a stranger
With an ambiguous smirk
Viejos in the bar bark
Old speeches from Albizu about
Unfair trades with uninvited guests
Their presumed laziness
Their last remaining act of rebellion
Forgotten cantos and cuentos are
Left in the pocket of a tattered guayabera
Next to a half-smoked cigar
There is a hole in the roof
Made by the last hurricane
Leaking new trends from the north
Onto the kitchen floor

Casinos steadily cramp the horizon
Like a gordito on a crowded bus
Mangos fall from trees
Like illusions from the
Kinky hair of a schoolboy
Whose sandlot has just been
Replaced by a strip mall
A highway divides the island in half
Estranging the past from the present
The dead are hung like hammocks
A desperate breeze dries the towel
Hanging from a vacant beach chair
The natives sleep suspiciously
Dreamless as the algae glows below them
The engine of a jet ski is heard in the bay
While scallops are collected for the
Tourist's dinner tomorrow