Force of Circumstance

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Jose Lacaba · *Philippines*

**FORCE OF CIRCUMSTANCE**

When Maritess was kidnapped
by the son of a congresswoman,
the stars flickered
like fireflies
and the moon was full.

When Maritess was taken
to Novaliches,
the wind was dancing
with the tall grass
and the cicadas
whistled insistently.

Four members of his gang
accompanied
the son of a congresswoman
in his new Mustang
And Maritess looked like Susan Roces.

When the gang ripped off
the expensive pantsuit
that a gay couturier
had made for Maritess,
an earthquake was rocking Manila
and the kids were
demonstrating at the Embassy.

When the gang caressed
the panties of Maritess
and pulled out her Tampax,
tear gas was crawling
on the streets of Sampaloc
and Susan Roces was recommending Lux soap on TV.
Four members of his gang accompanied the son of a congressman in the midst of the tall grass and five young men mounted Maritess.

And when the five young men had vented their hot blood on the bleeding will of the ex-virgin, they lighted imported cigarettes and burned the pubic hair of Maritess.

Four members of his gang accompanied the son of a congressman in his new Mustang and Maritess now looked like Bella Flores.

When Maritess was released by the son of a congressman, her boyfriend got drunk, the papers shivered with glee and the cops jerked themselves off.

Mr. Congressman is set to run in the coming elections. Let us not forget him.

THE SACRED PASSION OF ST. JOSEPH

Chisel, plane, and hammer, listen, I’ll whisper my bitter secret: though I’ve never whatchamacallit her, my girlfriend’s pregnant.