

# A Rosary . *George Barlow*

*for Little Ray*

his vatos — poised  
four at a time  
at each end of his coffin —  
would bring him back  
if they could  
would cruise the barrio again  
on big-ben afternoons  
with him again would  
pop their fingers  
whistle up their soul  
on zoot nights would  
sing tiara over rivera walls  
taste the rouge & nuzzle cholita feathers  
would seize their mirrors combs dreams  
tease & box would  
puff up their magic  
& wish these flowers away  
would not hurt so bad  
would change that night  
would take it easy if they could  
would stand now  
unbandaged uncrushed manly  
before the stunned calm  
de la familia  
would not hear the mass  
the creaking pews the guitar  
& lost boy vibrato in the song for him  
would not be fourteen  
tearfully born into this death  
would bring him bring him bring him  
glory be to the father  
back if they could