Bothered to shrug off The flies.

Back at the room You laid under a slow fan Only to get up And watch from the window A pup snap The ankle of a woman Carrying bricks. She kicked the dog And went on.

Again you turned away Afraid to think that it was night And along with the poor You would sleep with spiders, Dust in your throat And going down.

Hoeing / Gary Soto

During March while hoeing long rows Of cotton Dirt lifted in the air Entering my nostrils And eyes The yellow under my fingernails

The hoe swung Across my shadow chopping weeds And thick caterpillars Who shriveled Into rings And went where the wind went

When the sun was on the left And against my face Sweat the sea That is still within me

Rose and fell From my chin Touching land For the first time