

Under The Bamboo Grove

The scrawny hen said,
“Go to sleep now, my children.
The moon is on the wax again.
Watch out, watch out.”

“What of it, Mother?
Whether she’s bitten-off, gibbous or fat
It’s only now you’re warning us about that.”

“Krrk, krrk, don’t you make a sound now.
Stay away from the bamboo grove
And hide under my wings.”

“Ay, why so, Mother?”

“Listen you hard of hearing.
The moon is on the wax again after
Such a long waning.
Sharp as the blade of a scythe is the sight
Of the quivering evening shadows.
They dare in the midst of the light.
Hala, be still now.”

“Ay, we don’t understand, Mother.
What of it?”

“Here, here, hard of hearing.
After the long waning
The snakes and the monitor lizards will awaken
Flex their muscles and stir,
They will outrace each other looking for food.

The fast-strutting Boy Ugison,
The wandering Noy Buyogon
Disappeared under the bamboo grove

“Oh, Mother, even Noy Tubaon,
King of the tari, was said to have disappeared
One day at dusk.”

“Mother, is that the reason why
The moon grows fat?”

“I just don't know, children.
The one who should be probed about that
Is your father.”

“Ay, Mother, Father has not
Been home since yesterday.”

“Yes, that is why I'm father now
And tomorrow I shall answer you.

There's just us here
And you should now hide under my wings.”

Leticia U. Suarez

(Translated by Frohnie Frasco from the original “Ilawom Sa
Kakawayanan”.)