

Fatima Lim-Wilson's "Raising the Dead"

At least 120 people died when a floating shrine sank in the Bocaue River. Police officer Sonny Pablo said those aboard the boat were singing and praying . . .

PHILIPPINE NEWS REPORT, July 1993

Wreath-heavy, a child's body
Glistens in the sun, cruciform
Among many whose limbs swell
With significance: last
Breath arrested in grace, 5
Still singing of Mary's
Embrace of the broken sacrifice
That was her son. His cross
Sprouted from these waters.
This they believe as firmly 10
As they grip its ragged bark
Swaying upon the shrine.
One touch and tumors melt away,
Lost fortunes turn up in rice pots,
And wandering husbands, remembering 15
Home, break into a run.
Just as the bleeding woman
In that jostling crowd seared
Christ's hem with the fervor
Of her passing fingers, 20
Their faith lightnings through
The sacred wood. His love,
Too much to bear, knocks them
Down, down into depths of joy,
The blue robes of an upturned sky. 25
Their ears ring with their own
Exultance. Their bodies drag new wings.