

*Steven Cramer*

**DORADO**  
**(For Wayne Brown)**



Royal palms all over; men shimmy up  
the trunks, machetes clenched in their grins;  
coconuts thud like dud bombs on the lawn...

At the edge of this U.S. protectorate,  
sun mutes the frogs, whose choruses of night-  
chirps named them: *Co-quí*. By “the world’s

longest river pool,” hibiscus widen  
red yawns; spider lilies and heliconia  
mass in plots, their brass plaques, stolid

as palace guards, list phylum and class.  
Our Hyatt has evolved a new wing:  
time-share suites teem with whites

like us. The old crescent Cerromar  
closed, except for the casino, its dreamed  
future, more whites buying time, stalled

in litigation. Potted shield-ferns  
block unlit corridors; elevator doors  
jam into gap-toothed quiet. From Celia,

orchestrating poolside shuffleboard,  
or from Diego, the Bohio’s quick-draw  
bartender (so many years alert to thirst

his hair's gone gray along with ours)—  
we hear their every *gracias* imply: *amigo*,  
*let us be the last resort of your empire.*

But how one power ends, the next begins—  
that's beyond us all. Halfway around the world,  
in Beijing, thousands labor sunup to sundown

to fill our *Banana Republics*. A few *Yuan*  
skim the first off a pallet of beach shirts,  
then I'll pay eighty dollars for the last,

unbuttoning its silk off the manikin.  
His pecs a brazen gold in the shop-glass,  
he knows another *Medium's* on its way

to cover him. Capital: no more chance  
to tame it than to rid the Swan Café  
of *Chongas*—those aboriginal crows

Julio curses and fans three menus at.  
Each year they thicken on the netting,  
peck a new hole in, raid unbussed tables,

crap on the plates, beguile then terrify  
the younger kids. There's one now, and look:  
another's battling a third over some fries.