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## The Feast

Rebecca Morgan Frank

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# Frank: The Feast

## THE FEAST

Rebecca Morgan Frank

*Santo Tomas Internment Camp  
Manila, 1943*

There's no need to stalk a starving cat  
once the recipe has been devised:  
a bartered for onion, a found clove of garlic,  
abundance of curry that had been inedible  
in other meatless, watery soups.  
It was Elsa's idea, watching her pet shrink  
to tough muscle, surprisingly angular bones.  
She found the shape of a cat an illusion,  
its flesh and fur hiding something harder, more mean.

Harold, her husband, broke the cat's neck,  
then my grandfather skinned and boned it.  
Years later, he'll tell me this story of a feast,  
of times when hunger shapes a new ethic,  
when war carves a family  
into small pieces that float to the surface.

How could I know the pleasure they found  
in chewing flesh, boiling bones  
into a marrow soup that soothed their small child  
days after the meat was gone?