

Estero Marga Marga

Somewhere in Pablo Neruda
there must be a poem
speaking of this dead water
in the heart of Viña del Mar.

Cupped to the sea,
houses surround on hills.
Let's take one and live here,
stroll down to pastries and café con leche.

Graceful walking bridges arching
over what should be flowing stream,
but what is still stagnant water,
blocked from the sea by sandbar.

Native palms, thumb-sized coconuts,
red clams fresh from the sea,
fall streets empty of tourists.
Everyone comes here if they can.

But Neruda lived in Valparaíso
and not in these beautiful hills.
Surely he could tell us:
Should we fear this black water?