

Ricardo Pau-Llosa

En Plein Air

A band of soldiers resting in a field is no picnic—unless the war is won and the village women are loitering. Wine. Clouds shaking the brambles of gypsophila. Wine. Eating is with hands, and sex half-clothed. Caged fears are loosed. A farm barrels in shadow beyond the nimbus of leaves trembling. A girl emerges. A soldier. Crash in the distance rattles, but then they settle into the summer of moment again. Wine. The dust inhales. No lament can disdain. Noon and Grain. No mantles on the grass. The heat lenses in a whirl. Away, a painter changes stratus to cumulus, wheat to vines. A hill there, he'll lose.