



" F A C I N G F A C E S 2 0 0 2 - 0 4 "
T h e p o e t r y s e l e c t i o n

Eres el amor de mi vida
95 international poets united against violence towards women



Editor: Gino d'Artali

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this E-book to my mother who was a victim of sexual, physical and psychological violence throughout most part of her adult life, but who never ceased believing in me nor stopped telling me that I was and would be different. I deeply believe that her continuous re-assurance guided and still guides me in who I am and what I am and I can only hope that I honor her faith in me. A dedication too to all the girls and women who, to this day, are confronted with sexual, physical and/or psychological violence. I wish them the strength, the courage and the never ceasing self-esteem my mother always had, and in this I can only hope that this E-book and my continuous efforts to create awareness is and are an inspiration.

Gino d'Artali, editor

Credits

It goes without saying that all credits are to the poets presented in this E-book. Without their contributions to "FacingFaces" the message would only be the voice of one person calling out in the desert. It is the poetry that gives the voice form, color and expression, and through it a powerful voice heard worldwide and leaving a strong echo in many hearts. Thank you, participating poets, for your poetry, for your trust in me as editor and for speaking out. I said it before, I say it again: your voice is being heard.

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Introduction

"Eres el amor de mi vida" is the complete collection of poetry as contributed by poets worldwide and in support of an international traveling exhibition aimed at creating awareness about violence towards women and children.

The E-book presents 144 poems by 95 poets from 26 countries and is a not for profit publication of which the revenues are to support C.A.U.S.E. in its continuous efforts to organize and create exhibitions and awareness campaigns. More information about C.A.U.S.E. and "FacingFaces" can be found in the info booklet included on the CD-Rom

About the poetry

"Eres el amor de mi vida" is the follow up publication of "I love you", published in 2002 and a compelling collection of poetry that often heartbreakingly reveals the pain and suffering girls and women undergo when confronted with domestic violence and sexual abuse.

However, it is also a book of hope, simultaneously revealing too the strength victims have, to overcome their abusers' cowardliness, and showing their courage to share their stories with you.

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Poetry

Eres el amor de mi vida

Muestra ociosa de ganas,
por demostrar una dizque hombría,
mordisquea un pezón dormido, hundido,
que inmediatamente reacciona
y, una mano que se desliza bostezando
por una pierna que sometida, fría y acostumbrada
reacciona mecánicamente
se abren y licuan un pedazo de carne

Olor a cerveza,
para que oponerse
los golpes duelen, las injurias también
finalmente de todos modos obligada
no seja , de todos modos es violada.

El amor murió hace mucho tiempo,
La dizque bendecida unión matrimonial,
al diablo al primer año.
Injurias, golpes, celos, hambres
para solventar otras vaginas.

¡Hasta que la muerte los separe.!
Banales palabras.
En ellas se excusa la poca valía de este hombre
Y quizás de muchos hombres.

Los lamentos, las suplicas,
Han dejado de existir,
En las madrugadas un cuerpo pesado,
Hediondo se trepa, se mueve y tira su fracaso.

Con la luz del día se arma de valor
Espera poder huir.
Con la luz del día espera poder seguir viviendo.,
Al fin y al cabo ¿eres el amor de mi vida!

Angustia

En un ardiente día de verano,
hui a las montañas;
queria sentir el frio en mis mejillas;
queria sentir como se me congelaban;
queria sentir el frio en mis huesos;

queria ver al horizonte y la blanca nieve;
queria tomar puños de nieve y restregarlos en mi cara;
queria borrar todo destello de calor veraniego.

Mi vida no tenia sentido,
estaba sola sin rumbo
y un ardor incendiaba mis vísceras.
Necesitaba aire fresco,
frio,
libertad.

© **Ada Medina - México**

Untitled

Beneath burnt-out streetlights
Angels collect pain like trash.
Blanketed in nights' solitude they try
To swallow the entire world its sorrow.
Hands broken, tattooed with the symmetry
of weathered scars, they work tirelessly.

We will have our heaven too,
They whisper and everywhere
Storms are brewing. Window-perched
Above a cluster of sunflowers,
A jar teeming with nails rattles,
Power lines quiver uncontrollably.
Rain explodes and the earth is filled
With this hope, this coarse music.

© Alex Lemon - USA

Some scars never fade

Within unseen walls a silenced spirit walks
To haunt the living with truth
With the memories of her life-
And the dreams left betrayed.
In whispers which chill the flesh
In screams which shudder the soul
In cries that stir the heart
She moves in the silence of a photograph
Which haunt not from without- but within.
From the shadows to the Light
Her image a tapestry of fear
Of the dark legends yet untold
Still sealed in a box of pain
With no voice and no name. . .
And it is up to the living to open the box.

Untitled

Her heart lain in the shallow grave
in a world of such a terrible rage.
Trapped in a room with little clean air
the empty promises of life have little to spare.
Kissing the lips of sacred madonnas of stone
muttering prayers of a hovering hope-
To the Mother of God, a silver shield of sacred words-
that nothing will ever change unless her prayers are heard.

© Allyn 'Algar' Caravaglia - Usa

Dieciséis

I came to in a gutter,
feel the pain of my hips barely moving,
vergüenza between my legs.

La policia me dice, “What happened, chica?”
He is an older man, very official;
His moustache shone in the distant light.

._*._*._*._*

I was on Avenida Dieciséis,
Waking really
from a crowded dream.

The cars rushed towards el puente
or home for the madrugada.
The bars had closed
Vertigo, Ajuá... todos.

I was walking a mi casa—sola
No tenia dinero para el taxi
No tenia amigos en mi vida

Mi novio se fué
with someone else.
With friends, he said. Amables.
¡Mentiroso! Todos estan borrachos, or
With that pinche cabrona
with long black hair,
who was winking at him, at
his big, gold chain as
he held me coldly while
slurping his michelada.

A las dos in the morning
La hora de los sueños
Sweet dreams of togetherness
con mi amorcito...

I was walking alone on dieciséis
As a short, dark man
threw me into the gutter.
Why?

© Amit K. Ghosh - India/Usa

Yellow rose

Even dried and dead,
a yellow rose is enough
a yellow handkerchief is the last
they saw of her
if they could be sure
she was gone for good. She would never
do that to them.

Her children, her dark, bearded husband
stood in the too yellow sun
and watched it waving
goodbye or surrender
or freedom in
the last breath of breeze
torn on the rosebush
she tended, fluttering
her name is, was
Rosa, and on her empty
coffin yellow roses sleep.
Her littlest, Martita, asked
for red ones, or, at the very least,
bright pink, but Rosa's words
came softly as petals,
"Yellow is for caution *cuedado*,
and I want to live a long life."

© Anastasia Royal - Usa

I Wonder Why?

Its Night and Daddy is still not home.
I wonder why?
Mummy is keeping his food warm.
She tucks us into bed.
I hear the lock turn.
I hear a crash.
I wonder why?
Something fell.
I hear Daddy Yell
I hear Mummy Cry.
I wonder why?
I hear plates smash.
Another crash.
More yelling
and I begin to cry.
I wonder why?
I pull the blankets over my head
and I wish my daddy was dead.
All these fears
All these tears
I want them to go away.
I want to laugh and play.
But I cry.
I wonder why?

© Angel Glen - Germany-Australia

Shattered pieces

There is nothing but shattered pieces
my china cup has paid the price
I spent too much at the store today
and his reaction was not nice

The kids complained and fussed
I could feel impending doom
He was tired and did not care
now they are crying in their room

I cower and listen in numb despair
while his curses fill my ears
He has got my throat, I cannot breathe
my eyes well up with tears

"If only you did not make me mad!"
I know that is what he will say
I would run and hide and take the kids
but I would never get away

He is sitting there, his fire has died
pretending nothing fared
I stand and face him, cup in hand
I have never been so scared

"You see this cup?" I asked him
"So fragile and complete?"
I threw it down in one swift blow
and glass flew at his feet

He stared at me in disbelief
as I finally took a stand
"This cup is me, each broken piece,
I wish you would understand!"

"Some of the pieces can be fixed
with patience and some glue,
but some of these are just too small
this cup will never be new."

"Each time you say a hateful word
each time you grab my arm,
My mind and heart are shattered
and you will never undo the harm."

He told me I was crazy,
and I had better clean up the mess
I guess the lesson here was lost
and so am I, I guess

I found the strength to leave one day
but it took too long to get free
A shattered cup is my reminder
of the life he took from me

The pain is still too real to me
even though he is not around
He still finds ways to hurt me
and throw me to the ground

My life is shattered pieces
but at least I can know this:
Someday God will fix my cup
but who will take care of his?

Ever Crying Eyes

To the tune of Bette Davis Eyes

They treated you like gold,
but then to your surprise
Their words turned bitter cold
You have got ever crying eyes
They will raise a hand to strike you
But to others seem nice
Make sure the marks do not show
You have got ever crying eyes

And they will hate you
they will berate you
Then pretend to appreciate you
they are obnoxious
And they know just what it
Takes to make you go nuts
You have got nothing left but sighs,
you have got ever crying eyes

You do not feel safe at home
you have no appetite
You are numb right to the bone
you have got ever crying eyes
They will take a tumble with you
Throw you like you were dice

Until you are black and blue
You have got ever crying eyes

They will expose you
cause they know you
make you live for the crumbs they throw you
they are ferocious
And they know just what it takes to make your heart rush
All your friends think they are just fine,
but you have got ever crying eyes

And they will beat you
and mistreat you
do all they can to defeat you
They are relentless
And they know that you are weaker and defenseless
Days on end you just wish you could die,
you have got ever crying eyes.

© **Angie Horvath - Usa**

Evaporating earth

At last at last
floating minds,
who is that speaking,
fairy-tales
Vision
surrender understanding
the enduring mind

Without time floating
impregnate
the first blossom
from the almond tree.

Mountain frost gliding
through your morning valley,
a bird picking seeds
from other times.
Give birth to new fruit,
high and far
flying her paws
there evaporating earth.

© **Arcana - Netherlands**

Fragilidad

a Irene Blanco

Hay dolores que pesan
y se llevan
en el frágil "pipila"
del alma

Hay miserias que cierran
nuestros ojos
y los ciegan brutal
como candados

Hay silencios que ahogan
lentamente
apagando gritos
y reclamos

Hay un miedo que ronda
nuestros duendes
en un bosque interior
que se ha incendiado

Hay un mundo feroz
que nos acecha
investido siempre
de indolencia.

Y el dolor nos lleva a la miseria
la ceguera conduce a los silencios
bosques íntimos, perdidos, derrotados,
donde duendes malignos e incendiarios
se alimentan noche y día de la impotencia.

Sólo son mujeres

En esta frontera
el decir mujeres
equivale a muerte
enigma y silencio.
Seres desechables
que desaparecen
cruelmente apagadas
por manos cobardes.
Y todos nos vamos
volviendo asesinos
con la indiferencia

con el triste modo
en que las juzgamos:
"gente de tercera"
"carne de desierto"
sólo son mujeres
una nota roja
viento pasajero
que a nadie le importa.

Los gritos del silencio

Nacen desgarradores
los gritos del silencio
surgen de la impotencia,
crecen indiferentes
agonizan y mueren.

Y no tocan a nadie,
su presencia no duele.
Se esconden tras la noche
mas no son persicidos:
la gente siempre duerme.

Una fiera al acecho
se adueña de mujeres
y su llanto apagado
con la ciudad perece.

© **Arminé Arjona - Mexico**

Fallo final

(Original. Scroll down for the English version)

Viento fugaz.
Vida fugaz
de sueños ahogados,
de sueños arrebatados,
de cuerpos desangrados
arrojados al desierto,
buitres que devoran la vida de un tajo.
Tantas vidas arrastradas al olvido
por sentimientos egoistas,
negros trofeos,
desertores de la vida
al arrancar el último suspiro crecen
sin saber lo que son, ni serán.
El eterno omnipresente dará el fallo final
en medio del desierto,
el viento sopla fugaz...
Fugacidad de vidas mutiladas.

Final word

(Translation of Fallo Final)

Fleeting wind.
Fleeting life
of drowned dreams,
of enraptured dreams,
of bled bodies
thrown in the desert,
ravens that devour life at once.
So many lifes dragged towards oblivion
by selfish feelings,
black trophies,
deserters of life,
by extracting the last breath they grow
without knowing what they are, or will be.
The eternal omnipresent will give the final word,
in the middle of the desert,
the wind blows fleeting,...
The fleetingness of mutilated lifes.

Hipocrecia

(Original. Scroll down for the English translation)

El sol de Marzo
al medio día cae vertical,

me inclino sobre la arena quemante del sol,
quemante la arena se escurre entre mis dedos,
arena que huele a miedo,
arena que huele a terror,
arena que huele a piedad.
Unas manos salvajes ultrajando emociones,
quemante es la sangre que escurre entre los dedos malsanos,
arena que huele a dolor,
arena que huele a venganza.
El viento sofoca al calor,
viento que es complice del maltrato,
viento que borra toda huella,
viento que juega con la arena formando olas de paz...
Frontera hipocrita...
Hipocrita al mostrar tu cara de paz.

Hypocrite

(Translation of Hipocrita)

March its sun
vertically falls at noon,
I lean over the burning sand from the sun,
burning sun that drifts between my fingers,
sand that smells like fear,
sand that smells like horror,
sand that smells like pity.
Savage hands raping emotions,
burning is the blood that drifts between evil fingers,
sand that smells like pain,
sand that smells like shame.
The wind suffocates the heat,
wind that witness abuse,
wind that erases all tracks,
wind that plays with the sand
making waves of peace...
Hypocrite border...
Hypocrite by showing your face of peace.

© **Avi - Mexico**

Magenta Skin

Magenta skin around
my eyes; something wicked
to remember him by.
So many secrets, no
release--emotion
wrapped inside
an ache--barren
landscape without
and within. No joy
cast on the unseen
path, no direction
left to follow.

Peep Hole

Thump
on the door. Just the
Sears Christmas Wish Book
or Canadian Tire?

For once, you respond-
relaxed
but city-conditioned
to venture

a peep.
As always, the hallway stretches away
farther than fact,
like a passenger-side mirror.

Bright yellow
hovers by the faded
silver gleam of an elevator door.
Quarter-turn clockwise

releases the catch. You
look out
long enough to see
empty floor and the

nearer, clearer
shoulder curve just past the
stairwell exit.
Another tenant on his way

out? Back in and click
and thoughts of dinner
and one more revision
while time still allows.

Turn back.
Whispered sense leads the eye
back to the peep hole.
Yellow jacket

already closer
than the unaided
eye would allow.
He winds his way,

reaching at your end for the waist-
level handle.
No warning rattle, just the
slow, silent

rise and fall
that matches your
breathing.
Or is that his?

© **Betty Dobson - Canada**

Eyesight revolution

For The Young And Defenseless

you hold your breath and wonder
if it is not fate that all your tiny defections
thrive on an almond-hard fist
rummaging in Papas coat pocket for his cigarettes
as you count the many hours he spends delivering you good intentions
a quiet man who eats pork
for Papa you keep your buttons green
smiling when the sirens fail to sound
your nodes separated to absorb greater impact
until nearing fatal vertigo
you discover that the moth traveling half a mile an hour
is not your brother
but that one day we may all begin to look like that.

© **Brad Eubanks - Usa**

Komen en gaan

Er spoken beelden door mijn hoofd
van hoe hij slaat
en vuilniszakken
volgepakt met wat je hebt

Er klinken geluiden door mijn hoofd
van hoe jij gilt
en doffe klappen
gevolgd door ijzige stilte

Ik zie je gaan
en komen

En schuld speelt door mijn hoofd
wanneer ik net als zij
in onmacht mijn ogen sluit

als jij weer komt
bijna gaat

© Car - Netherlands

Dancing around the flames

He returns from the land of the gods
white petals shower the paved courtyard
bass thumps through closed doors
wispy smoke trails around freshly
washed clothes
Nerves once sleeping stand at attention,
Keys and pin codes, lock it all up,
yes, scum, yes, fuck me, yes, selfish bitch
its only a vase, a new plaster wall

A six foot raging inferno,
sixteen, going on two

Sweep up the glass and rest before he wakes.....

My fear

punch it husband
drill it dentist
invade its house thief
shove it to the ground son

that is not fear
Mine goes something like this,

Gremlins swirl. Slowly at first,
circling their way up in a menacing fashion,

they swoop in a frenzied haze,
giddiness, confusion....internal chaos erupts choking the air from pipes

the cogs dry up completely as the engine spasms violently,

The rhythm is gone
a blinding tidal wave sweeps through,

I am dying! hurry up and kill me or make it stop, please help me...
sweaty palms reach out,
as the whole thing collapses

Whimpering and rattled
the attacks continue,
random and unexplainable
the dreaded monster returns to
wreak havoc again and again

and again and Not Again!!

Run that red light,
leave that concert,
flee the meeting,

must avoid
must avoid
must avoid

old ladies shuffle up the street
invalids in wheelchairs roll by
my children walk to school

A tidy package of terror
wrapped in a pretty face
safe at home for now,
you are ok, it only hurts me
Its my problem..my fear
everything else is a joke

The Chameleon

Tinkering and scraping with gusto
Vigorously smelling victory,
Feeble when weakened and stagnant
In times of defeat, but never admitting it

Everlasting struggles miraculously conclude
As resplendently she arrives,
Blinking back the sun of this bright new world
she cautiously embarks on her quest

Fluttering and stumbling at first,
How does one fly when the cocoon
Has stifled, suffocated and captivated for
An eternity, or so it seems?

A fortuitous glance in the mirror sees
Hope smiling back
A ménage of colour and future
Daintily dances around
The joyful weight-less meandering
Completes the transformation,
She is airborne

© **Carlene Parianos, Australia**

Child of violence

She was locked up in the closet
at the age of eight
by her mother the awful woman

She was locked up in her bedroom
frequently with him
his machete at her throat
as he invaded her small body

She danced and smiled
danced some more
in small confines the awful woman watching

She kicked the door in
screaming her rage
at her mother the awful woman

She was dragged by her hair
in the vortex of the tornado
twisted arms head banged till she bled
by the awful woman

She dances now in the fetal position
of the closet
the awful woman smiling

© Carol Sircoulomb - Usa

Reclamo Justicia

"En memoria de las mujeres asesinadas en Ciudad Juárez"

Llevo los pocos años de mi vida herido por las crueles garras del destino;
El trance de un Dios que alberga un cosmos mitológico,
Sobrio para algunos, paradójico enigmático...

Un hechizo de plata que expira en los brebajes taciturnos (alucinación),
El vuelo siniestro que acude al encanto irresistible
De la furia que deambula en el temor de las vírgenes.

Los valles de hambre que atrapan calamidades.
-Luna Menguante- atracción que se diluye en le recinto silente de la espera,
de esta enajenación por dejar atrás los vacíos de un siglo,
el cambio de ruta por 290 km recorridos en la mezcla de arena y sol.

Sigo en la espera

La sangre acartonada en el reloj
Ya corre por los vientos.

Aquí todo es polvo,
El cuerpo, la sangre, los sueños.

Ya suena mi nombre en las calles,
En la mirada ajena que espera la nota roja.

Los cielos reclaman su hija,
El tibio rumor que se baña en las tierras
De mi cuerpo agusanado.

Basta

Este lienzo que enmudece mi reclamo
a punto de correr por los espacios huecos de mi voz,
es uno de tantos represores de tantos silencios,
de una piedra clavada en la madre dadora que no dice nada
que espera un vuelco a esta época mal habida.

Yo dedico estas manos que aunque son poco sustento
Las clavo al fuego por la flor, por mi madre, por tu hermana, por tus hijas
Para que si el tiempo lo admite pueda interrumpir el vacío,
Recorrer los errores de algunos y traer a este día
Los sueños demolidos por infames,
Por anonimatos que quedaron en el ayer del paraíso
Y se han quedado en terrenos ajenos,
Y poder gritar con esta mudez

el dolor que siente mi alma por la sangre derramada
de nuestras mujeres, de nuestras muertas,
por las que somos mundo y somos vida.

Que hable el cielo y se escuche como estremece el cuerpo ajeno;
como sucumben las promesas destruidas de una y otra niña
y como quedaron atadas al destino que las marco cruelmente
por la sinrazón de unos cuantos depredadores.

© César Mendoza - México

Violation

My only crime is my youth.
Are you jealous?
Or just covetous.
My body is mine, from
infancy till adulthood.
That is the way
it is supposed to be.

But now as I touch
the remaining shards
of my womanhood,
I rage as you drag me
screaming
through the woods.

My head hits a stone,
cracking my skull.
I bounce over a rock
severing my spine,
breaking my bones.
The law will not help.
It is made up of you.

You gouge out my eyes
so I cannot see you
tearing out my flesh,
claiming it for your own.
In my mind its eye
I see only Momma,
my only-ever anchor.

Momma! I am losing
ownership of my body.
My identity, barely formed,
is stripped away from me.
I call to my sister to Run! Run!
There is no more hope for me.
But there is hope for her.

I am six.
She is only three.

Bruises

Under the shroud
Lie the blue bruises
Piled on top of each other
Like boxes in a clutter.
There just is not enough space
On her thin pallid face.

They crowd about,
Comparing shades,
Who had been harder hit
And who would be just a graze.

The day comes
When they become
A single purple mass,
Result of a hand its
Unrepentant rage.
That same day
She picks up the axe
And hacks off
Both his arms and his legs.

His face remains unscathed,
She wants him to watch
Her quick hands and
The carving knife
And be amazed.

© **Christina Sng - Usa**

("Bruises" originally appeared in Lunatic Chameleon, and was subsequently reprinted in Cemetery Poets: Grave Offerings)

Innocent Eyes

She was nine years old
All that her eyes have seen made her cold,
Curled up on the couch
Her toy poodle shaking crouched!
She tries to block her ears,
It is so hard to control the tears
The shouts and screams were ignored,
Even the dog downstairs must of heard
How can they not hear?
The thumps and crashes everywhere,
The bangs and booms are not a ghost,
Mommy please hide was said in her throat
Her mind wishes Daddy to stop it and put on his coat,
But his hammering hand upon her face and body
Why was he freaking?
She loved him without thinking,
From one room to the next
He chased her and beat her with no rest,
Until finally he brought it all to an undo end
With the knife her heart had no chance to defend!
As the police man carried the child out the door
She saw with open eyes the blood on the kitchen floor
Mommy is now in heaven where true love resides,
The child will always remember what she saw with
innocent eyes.

No More Tears

As I shower, I hear the voice.
Yelling, calling names, nothing but noise.

I cry, but go unheard.

The shower splashes, something crashes.
I hold on, listening to the water as it splashes.

I cry, but go unheard.

The words I have heard, go over and over in my head.
All the while I am wishing I was dead.

I cry, but go unheard.

As I pray through the tears, for no more fears.
I step out into the humid air, I hear his snare.

I cry, but go unheard.

Take a shower once more.
As I open the door, he lies on the floor.

I cry no more.

© **Cynthia L Memmolo - USA**

Unkind

Ice water veins keep you calm cool and collected
So you can strike the warm loving unsuspected
You are a surgen the like not seen before or again
You can slice out a heart and not break the skin
Here I am sitting at the table
Ghosts of laughter are able
To comfort and torment
All that they find
You left my mind
Unkind
To me

Open hands help, open minds free 2

A rock is not
a man,
a woman
is not sand,
concrete,
is not as hard
as will.

A child is not
a toy,
not unbroken
girl and boy.

A hole is not
a home,
green grass
not played on

Why?

© D.C. Bursey - Canada

Feats of courage

Feats of courage and the heroic death.
For the cause country or the desert zones.
Peeping voices low under old stony building.
In wake of the retreating armies of the Rhone.
On the hill an impregnable fortress.
On the ground a mound of hay and mud.
The battering of bats against the window.
In ruins destroyed by the war of mammon.
Give us a change of seasons.
A little pause of breath after the sunrise.
Two and two along bundled hay stacks.
An undamaged barn along the ground...
Looking across the high window there is a landscape
stretching across the fields.
But the internal bonds of prison keep tying.
The gaze inwards towards the shields.
Facing the demi gods of death and destruction.
Muzzled up rifles wolf dogs punitive camps.
In the verse a demolition a smoldering ash.
To counteract the poisons of the times....

There was no one.

There was no one
Only the sound of my footsteps
Or perhaps the sound of my breath
Disturbing some wandering brief
A tone wedged in whispering grief.

There was no one, only a shadow
Walking on the incumbent street
Memories of pathways going stray
With hands held in an evening greet.

Perhaps only in footsteps of the lost
In dances of the rains of whirling trot
Murmurs of north in dirges of drain
Hungers of the earth in cities of pain.

Children play.

The children play in the sunshine
In a nascent dawn born of baited bliss
Three pronged foot webs in the sand
Of creatures hungry in the meddler nights.

The dreams that hold immensity of night
Forms sound- sculpted in zones of skies
Strivings born of the search for unknown
Wandering wind in passing left a message.
Shorn of chains in straining culprits of hill
Robbers of lives constrained by prouder will.

The children play in the moonlight
In nutant nights born of burdened bliss
Three panthers striding across the plains
Casting their shadows under starry hiss.

Do not want to turn.

I do not want to turn again
Where oft I have trodden in my days
When the sounds of my footprints imprints
Crimson blood stained mouths of memories.

Purple trafficking in the humdrum streets
Where nothingness enforces reinacted designs
Tongues burnt by hearts of scorpioned flames
Among florid furies of the beleaguered nights.

What has come over me in the dew of dawn
Scorched hands plucking at the blistered eyes
Golds of harvest now stored in shadowy deep
In frigate of serpents steeped in venom kind.

I do not want to turn again
Seeking out the comforts of hope or sleep
In some vacant spaces of the charnelled fields
Where dazed desires suspend in vagrant deeds.

© Durlabh Singh - Kenya-UK

I

Soy de goma o de cereza?
me estiro tanto que en las tardes,
me rompo toda
de los pies a la cabeza
Me adhiero al manto
de algun dios a quien ya nadie reza
y luego lo abandono
Busco la sorpresa fortuita
Fugaz como las burbujas,
de ese champangne del color del sol y la tormenta
Me escondo abajo
en lo mas profundo del vaso
y me pongo roja a la fuerza
Carmesi
un poco revuelta
Y estallo dulce y estruendosa
Un poco a pedazos
Completamente abierta
Siniestramente tonta
Absurdamente amnesica
Un poco entera
Un poco certera
Un poco a la fuerza....

II

La soledad esta en casa
con un pedazo de pan
Ha entrado por la puerta grande
como siempre
Ya conoce bien los rincones
El pasillo en la vereda de mi cama
Las persianas cerradas que son ahora mis ojos
Transita con su parsimonia de mujer grande
Tiene la experiencia de mi nostalgia,
como cuando camino con zapatos

III

Nocturna
Me levanto de las seis de la tarde
para contemplar al sol
Tumultuosa llego hasta la orilla de mis ojos
Hoy llueve
Y mi cuerpo
se resbala por los cordeles de casa
Hago travesias para retroceder al cielo
Ya son casi las ocho

No he dejado a la noche que me expulse a la cama
Juegos siniestros de madrugada
no tardaran en llegar
Toco el tiempo que pasa
No me acostare hasta que aparezca el sol
La luz de la noche es mi mejor ventana
Me abre a sus silencios
Tomo entre mis dedos espacios vacios
del oceano verde que son mis pezones
y juego con ellos
a historias prohibidas de viejos museos
de la vida
Y la madrugada llega con su sendero estrecho
Caminos susurran a mis oidos
los cantos de cuna que nunca me duermieron
Ahora tampoco me acuesto
Acompaniare al sol hasta que salga
La luz del dia me abre con sus puertas
todas las redes de hacer acrobacias
para saltar este y todos los dias

© **Eliana Arevalo, Peru-Argentina**

A Triad – Poem

I. Shameful

Precious life,
Snuffed by violence,
Fed by hatred,
Screams of torture,
Go unheard,
Muted by the howling desert winds,
Scorpions, snakes and tarantulas,
Witnessed the deformed and defected souls,
Do their evil,
Protected by Darkness,
A Holocaust of defenseless poverty,
The cries of pain,
Heard only by the heavens,
Tears lovingly gathered
By the Saguaro,
As an act of mercy,
For the proud,
Law will prevail,
For the humble,
A song is all that is left,
“La Vida No Vale Nada.”

II. Recuerdame

Recuerdame en poesia,
Las mananitas que no cantare,
Los hijos que no tendre,
Las amistades que deje,
Tuve suenos,
Pero en sueno quede,
Y a mi madre llorando deje.

III Donde Esta El Valor?

La comida de la violencia es el odio,
El no hacer nada,
Es compartir la comida del velorio,
El crimen de omission,
Es pecado de violacion,
Tanta culpa tiene el del crimen cometido,
Como el que dobla las manos,
Cometiendo nada,
Las manos lavadas,

No quitan el delito,
Para esos que hacen tan poquito,
La sangre de las violadas suplica,
‘Por favor, Morenita, estas violencias quita.’
Donde esta el valor?
De defender el honor,
Pues, la flor de Mexico,
La mujer mexicana,
Ha sido violada!

© Elizabeth Lopez Florez - Usa

Carta de una noche apoliptica
(letania de una madre asesinada)

Hoy amanece mientras todos nos volvemos eternos
Y ciegos...

[latido... latido... latido]

Veo lágrimas derramándose por las mejillas de la Inconsciencia
Veo fuego del otro lado del espejo...

[latido... latido... coraje]

Brisas melancólicas monitorean el tibio aire
Y la lluvia cae...

[latido... latido... pausa]

La lúgubre tarde cubre el suspiro del sol juarense
Los juguetes quietos quietos...

[latido... latido... llanto]

No es lo mismo la avena fría
Ni darle de comer al perro...

[latido... latido... suspiro]

Vamos tarde de vuelta a nuestra tierra
Mamá se quedó aquí...

[latido... latido... silencio]

in memoriam

© Erick Falcon - Mexico

Gebroken

Blauw huil ik
mijn wangen rood
slik mijn geweren in
mensen sluipen
dringen in
machteloos laat ik begaan

het wit van mijn tanden
ontoonbaar bloot
ik was een mens
en voel me het vuil
van de straat

krijt hard
alleen de kat verstaat

Een leeg bankstel

krop het niet op meid
laat de boosheid maar buiten
voer die spanning af

en schreeuw het maar uit
roep en zing zo hard je kan
het zal helend werken

laat het niet zitten
je besliste juist voorheen
hou vast aan het leven

ween maar je verdriet
het hoeft niet verborgen,
de steen verandert de bedding

een bankstel vol leegte

Kerstmis

ooit leek alles nieuw
losgelaten oude pijn
omarmend speelsheid

energieke vreugd
oplaaiend, weerom geveinsd
levenszin verdwijnt

dronkenmans woorden
gaan op in rusteloze nacht
ouderband vermoordend

irritant gevoel
van al-oude ontbering
miskende zoon

grijzend de dag
vreugdeloze kerstmis nadert
vrede onverwacht.

Oudejaarsavond-nacht

sfeervolle vrede
lichtend in frisse kamer
bangelijk feesten

ijzig de koude
omtovert een gezellig
samenzijn tot pijn

gesteund door drank
verandert de mens in dier en
bevroren zelfhaat

dan trekt weerom op
beschermingsmuren,sluit af
ooit geopend hart

Wie verstaat?

Ik zit hier maar
starend
geen mens die
binnenin voelt
ik heb het koud
voel me smerig
aangeraakt

ben ik fout
te jong
ik wil niet
maar het gebeurt toch
want vaders wil
is wet
en vaders daar moet je van houden

toch?

© Erna Muermans - Belgium

Masked man

I am tired of endless drones,
busy blues, filling out blank time.
I am tired of waiting as the wheel of fortune spins,
praying the needle will land on pink again.
I am fed up with whining, crying, fighting, wasting time.
Also, with endless promises of rosy endings
by voiceless people of various cults.
I am tired of snoopy, droopy spectators,
sniffing at secrets yet unborn.
At those who herald good news views,
one day and the next,
prophesize doom and gloom.
I am sick of eating, digesting
and eliminating the same stale,
recycled food and air.
I am ready for the kiss of eternal bliss,
after years of suffering and scorn.
Masked Man - leave me alone,
let me soar to regions yet unknown,
alone and whole.

Apple

innocent, round, red
fruit of sinners and friends
containing universal truths
voices screaming skyward
juicy, morsel chewed

drips of sensual delight
tempting palette, mind
conjuring flights of fancy
across cosmic time

drop by drop, tangy tender
a sweet fair maiden
crunched by bitter anger
of love its sharp teeth

penetrated smooth soft skin
yielding young flesh pulp
the juice ran dry
devoured in one swift gulp

a core rejected

thrown in a heap on the floor
satisfied, he looked around
for another fruit to score

© **Eva Lewarne - Poland/Canada**

Teach boys that men do such things

count the bodies, count the bruises, hairs, limbs
numbers of numbers equal to nothing

dirt in a mouth, pebbles over eyes, each hair crawling away
scream-echoes in the desert night shiver the stars

10,000 children, 10,000 sisters, 10,000 mothers
their blood a rust on the sands of the desert

in the dark city, a man with darkness stalks
a shadow with a face of light - his eyes, his money

or a gang of wild boys, keepers of chaos
lost in their dark fantasy, locked in that reality

prayers for those women, cries for revenge, justice
poems about violence written in blood

since woman first took root in a garden
the lessons were always for the sons

if the boy knows the slap, he calluses
if he learns the caress, he flourishes

teach boys that men do such things
teach boys to sing and dance under the moon

© **Gene Keller - Usa**

Passieve goden

Hoe bitter de verzuchting deze wereld zwanger van geweld
van weerloze vrouwen en kinderen dagelijks aan terreur blootgesteld
van moeders en dochters door vaders en zonen verkracht en terechtgesteld
van een kinds laatste, ijselfijne kreten in een verlaten maïsveld
van lijken nog te schouwen, hun aantal nog niet geteld
van doden nog te komen, hun verhaal nog niet verteld
van ongestrafte daden, waarvoor nog geen oordeel geveld
dus verenig u mensheid, want dit dient hard aan de kaak gesteld
anders maakt het ons tot passieve goden van dit duivelse geweld.

Verdriet

De bres is geslagen, de dijk begeeft
het water zoekt zijn weg langs uitzonderlijke wegen
zelfbedruipend, niet te stuiten
als plengende regen geboren uit donkere, zwangere wolken
als opwellende bronnen die pas ontspringen
en hun uitweg langs mijn wangen in een stroom van tranen vinden
niet meer te weerhouden
je heengaan verzwolgen in een stortvloed van ritmische schokgolven
het is mijn verdriet om jou
jij die me zo dierbaar was.

©Georges Boone - Belgium

Juárez

Juárez,
where surrealism rules
or so one says,
pointing out signs
on rock and bark.

Where I only see
bloodstains
of another young life
smashed.

Yes I do
visit the ladies bars
and wonder
whom will she marry first:
the narco or the politician?
What difference is there anyway
Both selling opium to the people.

Yes I do
buy chiclets from children lost
and wonder if ever they will help
to chase the bitter taste on my lips
in fear of finding them
dead on the street.

Juárez,
where I live
and dream,
or at least
try to fulfill my dreams,
however too often haunted
by the indescribable

Surrealism?
Escapism?

Quien sabe!
Me vale madre

© Gino di Artali -Belgium-Philippines

A bird sang when I died

I heard a bird sing when I died,
And if this eternal sleep
But one memory preserves in dreams
That through the darkness shine,
The bird singing when I died
Would be the memory of mine.

© **Hakon Soreide - Norway**

Terror stricken
Fearful eyes
Running for shelter and life.
Whom can I trust if I must?
And I see and I flee
And I am not free
And I certainly have no choice.

At least the deceased
are at peace - are at PEACE ?

© **Hans-Georg Turstig - Germany-Usa**

In Houston.

Today,
this woman,
hairs hued orange (like popular seventies carpet),
wrinkles swimming across her face
like puddles of paranoid children
in a "learn to swim" YWCA class.

Shared her voice with our air
Gargantuan notes carrying fits of pain,
needed aid.

We sped to her,
found her in lacerated wrappings,
furious flesh rouging rage,
grinning through torn pockets of
expensive, summer clothes,
crouched over..
shoulders pulled to envelope,
dallying knees,
like when native mothers cradle
freshly birthed jungle babies-
placental goo slurping,
entwined
around legs and crotch.

she wore drips from her eyes,
thighs soggy
from age and fear.
Stranger jostled her.
Upside down, side to side,
anger rummaging for her things.
"gimmee that, gimmee gimmee",
like an impatient four year old
shakes pennies piggy banked.

© **Hum Huxley - Usa**

Not Too Far From Here
(for the women of Juarez)

Not too far from here
smudged red lipstick
remains on the hands of
two legged coyotes
who savor womens' flesh.
Not too far from here
piles of parched bones and
burgandy smocks lie in the
desert and names of maquiladoras
are etched on the skull, femur, somewhere.
Not too far from here
women are expendable
last page news
equivalent to the peso.
Not too far from here
the stench lingers through
the holes of barbwire fences
crossing the borders
and tickling our noses
Not too far from here in Juarez
hundreds go unsolved
meaningless breasts and wombs
strewn across vast amounts of land
decaying
Not too far from here
an uneasy silence
covers unmentionable deaths
Brujas blancas are working overtime
calling on the Virgen for assistance
Not too far from here
we can hear whispers of restless souls
crying for peace
crying for justice

Garbage

Babies used to be left wrapped in
cotton blankets decorated with pink ducks
and placed on cherry wood pews in
Catholic Churches.

Babies used to be placed on back porches
in weaved baskets in nice neighborhoods.
Now we rid this " garbage " from our bodies

yanking the cord and
gutting ourselves
like fish.

Troublesome irritating little humans
Tossed in trash cans of the nearest alleys
like beer cans
like used needles
like cigarette butts
in dilapidated card board boxes
Recyclable material
no...
Murder, murder, murder.

If I Had Known

If I had known it would end like this
If I had known paradise would disappear
the moment that bitch took a bite of
the apple, the moment that Adam
let his guard down.
I would have tugged on Gods'
robe at the spark of my conception
and told God I don not want to go.
There should have been a warning of
talking snakes and manipulation
A warning loud like the sirens
of air raids.
Air raids that defeated men in
Hawaii's paradise.
Adam should have kept his rib
cause paradise has transformed
into sticky fire hydrants
and crack pipes aborted fetuses and hatred.
Now Mother Earth needs a papsmear
She needs a thousand bulldozers and
dump trucks between her legs
to clear away toxins and debris
like at ground zero
the air I breathe is bitter
like a lemon on a tree
in a South Central backyard.
If I had known it would end like
this, then the garden of eden
should have been boarded
up and surrounded with barbwire
like concentration camps

that demonstrated the lack of human civility. If I had known it would end like this, I never would have designed my wings in Heavens' Art class, wings that would fly me into my mothers' birth canal. If I had known it would end like this, I would have skinned that freakin snake and wore him as shoes.

© Jackie Joice - Usa

Television

I watch 'The Simpsons' as you fall,
Carson as you cry,
Sienfeld as the tanks roll
and cities crumble beneath the thunder of bombs.

I see the floods rage in the flashing light of the tube.
Babies cry with bellies bloated and lips caked with flies,
and I turn away not wanting to spoil my appetite.

I eat ice cream and chocolate
as a girl lies sold on a filthy bed,
beneath a fat man pumping
for an armful of snow white ecstasy.

I worry about love and fidelity
as a child is undressed by her step father,
felt with ice cold hands as her mother turns away.

Guns fire, poisons seep
trees fall and whales bleed behind the pretence of political lies,
while I play games on my computer
putting boredom to rest.

I laugh and watch football, drink beer as you fight for life,
nibble pretzels as cancer eats your body,
change the channel as hunger steals your soul.

I buy a lottery ticket
for a chance to escape this misery of mine,
watching your agony on my technicolour stage.
Stories to spoiled children, too sleepy to hear.

And will we in time, watch our grandchildren cry?
When the world in black smoke lays ruined beneath the dollars feet,
will we ask, how did it come to this?
Or will we see the villain staring
from hollow eyes in the reflection of a wooden box.

© **James Cain - Usa**

The other side of nowhere

Where do children go
When they are not here anymore?
What happens when they go away?
Wherever they are, it seems
They are there and there they will stay.

Where do they go,
Those children so fair?
Where do they go when they are far away?
Wherever they are I hope and pray
That they are able to laugh and play.

This place, where children go
With hope filled dreams or so,
Is a place not so fair I am afraid
Filled with terror, misery, and pain.

Where do children go
When they are not here anymore?
I am afraid to ask, to seek, to know.
It is not a place so kindly I suspect;
Not a place that I will ever know.

© **James C. Wardlaw - Usa**

For the young and defenseless

you hold your breath and wonder
if it is not fate that all your tiny defections
thrive on an almond-hard fist
rummaging in Papas coat pocket for his cigarettes
as you count the many hours he spends delivering you good intentions
a quiet man who eats pork
for Papa you keep your buttons green
smiling when the sirens fail to sound
your nodes separated to absorb greater impact
until nearing fatal vertigo
you discover that the moth traveling half a mile an hour
is not your brother
but that one day we may all begin to look like that.

© **Jamie Deramee - Usa**

TAIS-TOI!

tu ne as pas le droit
à être toi

tais-toi !
un peu de discipline
et montre ta bonne mine

tais-toi !
le devoir est sacré
faut se voûter et étouffer

tais-toi !
ton unique destin
est de suivre leur chemin

tais-toi !

Zwijg!

je mag niet zijn
wie je bent
zwijg !

wat meer discipline
en een blij gezicht
zwijg !

de plicht is heilig
werk je maar dood
zwijg !

je enige uitweg
is "hun" weg
zwijg !

Silence!

don not try to be
who you are

silence !

some more discipline
and a cheerful face

silence !

your duty is sacred
work yourself to death

silence !

your only way
is "their" way

silence !

" tes beaux yeux "

j' y vois ta douleur
qui ne s' exprime pas
j' y vois ta peur
de je ne sais quoi
j' y vois l' embarras
de ta confusion
le désarroi
de tes émotions
et derrière cela
sans affection
il y a le vide

© **Jan Theuninck - Belgium**

The rope

Because of your touch my life is forever changed.
My entire self image has been rearranged.
Your hands should have protected, Instead they projected,
Nightmares and bad memories. I am forever effected.
Your lips should have whispered loving words set in soft tones.
Instead they only pushed through vile sounds, breathless moans.
Your skin should have smelled of Irish Spring and Cologne
Instead my mind is implanted with the stench of foul sweat and hormones.
I should have been playing with my childhood friends.
Instead of satisfying the fetishes of a much older man.
Your life was shattered that day my voice rose.
I may have tightened the noose, but you strung the rope.
Every strand woven by your heavy hands.
The knot tied more tightly with every sickening demand.
I hope your breath leaves you much slower than my innocence did.
May you feel the same suffocation that I did as a kid.
When you get to hell may you be stripped of your soul.
The way you stripped me of mine at only 8 years old.
I think, what a coward, as you swing to and fro.
Mouth hung wide open, feet dragging the floor.
Hanging from the noose of the rope that you wove.

Calm after the storm

See, light as it shines through the cracked door.
Smell, the liquor on his breath and through his pores.
Taste the bitterness of his forbidden kiss.
Feel, hands creeping, slowly, through your hair, over your breast.
Winds whirl though you, like a tornado of senses.
Shivering from the cold.
His glare strikes you, it is lightning.
You hear the thunder of his moans.
Then comes the rain,
Pouring, streaming, staining your pillow.
Staining your soul.

Daylight breaks, you awake.
The window, sun dancing on its sill,
Cracked to invite the warm summer breeze.
The ballerina dances on the crisp white fabric.
The smell of cut grass.
The calm after the storm.

Shame

I am the child without a mother
I am the mother without a daughter.
I am the fear that holds me captive
and as sure is my silence
until I am the body lying cold in a grave.
I am the faces flashed on the evening news.
Missing
murdered.
I am a family its grief and a husband his shame.
I am the cry for help in tear-swollen eyes.
I am the one it was too late to save.
I am the memory of a battered body
and a shattered soul.
I am the voice of your sister
your mother
your daughter
your friend
And I am you.

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Facing Faces

ciudad sin luz,
01-22-' 01 marked you
when narcotraficantes
scarred another daughter.

her muffled screams
went unnoticed
tumbling from speeding car
and childhood.

times of unconcern and apathy
are torn from every face,
from every thought,
from now on.

juárezes of the world,
your janeths cry out;
terror looks from pleading windows.
blindness makes it so.

averted faces and eyes strangle
as surely as guilty hands,
the light and innocence of our young
until faces turn from shadows.

© **jim "max" christ - Usa**

A las mujeres confinadas a la prision de un velo, ä su dios y a sus hombres.

Sombras de guerra,
túnica fantasmales que levitan
entre realidad, horror,
intolerancia y muerte
muerte que se esgrima
en nombre de un Dios.

Visiones atrapadas
entre sutiles barrotes de algodón y seda,
lágrimas que lloran niños muertos
sueños mutilados por una mina...

Lágrimas de sal deshidratados
por la visión agreste
de desértica y fría montaña,
hielo que congela estómagos vacíos,
que no llenan los tres granos de trigo
para las mil bocas hambrientas
oh, Dios, Alá, o qui;en seas,
¿dónde queda esa bondad infinita
con la que pretendiste
iluminar la inteligencia
de los hombres de la tierra?
los mismos hombres
que hoy hacen la guerra,
que hacen la guerra
y engendran muerte
oh... Dios, no se si exciste...
/Si exsistes/...Hazte presente.

Desierto mancillado

en memoria de Liliana Alejandra

17 años y está muerta
mujer, trabajadora, madre,
no quisiera creerlo, pero es cierto
misoginia y barbarie desatada
estadística y realidad
las mujeres del desierto
gritan dolor y rebeldía, hasta ahogar la garganta
en un puñado de dolor arena, dolor de sol,
dolor de sangre,
visión que duelo de terror amenazante,
/ ni una más /
gritan las mujeres del desierto,

del Valle,
de la Sierra de Guadalupe,
de Lomas de Poleo,
de Palo Chino,
de Anapra.
/ Ni una más /
gritan las mujeres del desierto,
ni una más...
/ Ni una más.../

© **Josse - Mexico**

My Worst Enemy

I am a woman with a heart delicate loving as a dove
You came to me as if you were an angel of love
I had no reason to doubt your sincerity
Under your charm I fell in love and so deeply
You promise me the moon and stars
Little did I know under this façade?
My sanity would be the price
You were nothing but a roaring lion in disguise

I was a woman in love you were a man on the hunt
Seeking to dominate with a fist of fury
Your deceit your lies your cruelty
Everyday I feel its agony
I was like a bird except now I have broken wings
Your scars hidden well I carry

I am in prison in a cage
Every night your footsteps I hear I live in fear
So I close my eyes and cry
Not knowing wondering expecting the worst
My body shivers weakened from your inflicted pain

It is the silence I fear I can feel you are near
Like the flick of light ready to start a fight
How can I stop this so the children will not hear?
Helpless behind closed doors my prison walls
Again I must take the fault
Hit the floor beg you to stop
Pleading for mercy I am in agony

These bruises this pain and shame silence me
Will I have to look in my children eyes and see?
Too hard for me to bare
What started out, as a fairy tale now is a living hell?
No matter what I say or do
My sentence you have already decided

You instilled fear to control manipulate me
With your insane unfounded jealousy
The one I once so loved is my worst evil enemy
But one day
My spirit will take flight I will be set free

Little Butterfly

You are free to fly,
unlike me,
you are not tied.
Nothing can keep you down,
so you fly high in the sky.

Amazed by your beauty,
and charmed,
I watched you depart.
You come and go as you please.
There is no limit on time for you.
You just follow the breeze.

How I wish sometimes,
your little wings were mine.
The multi colors I see
captures the eyes,
such elegance and beauty.
Your waltzing up in the air,
so care free.
In a tree your landing will be.
with no need to worry,
in the leaves you will have security

Now the sun is going down,
morning will soon come around.
Just wait patiently little butterfly,
you just wait patiently and soon again
you will fly away free.

© **Juliette Girard - Usa**

One Nation

Under the merciless sun
Does she feel her baby weeping
On her back demanding
Milk that her flaccid breasts
Cannot provide

While the president of the nation
Gaily mends the fate of his people
Over six-course meal
In a noble restaurant
With his buddy heads of state

Hope and despair make her walk
Perilous streets at night
In a dress bright and short
To attract shady clients
For a few bucks an hour

While the president of the nation
Boards his private jet
In an Armani suit
To relax in his lavish
Five million dollar weekend home

With sores on her hands from
Foul water of the dry river
Does she caress the tiny head
Of her dying child
To sooth its last hours

While the president of the nation
Takes a bath in his gold-plated tub
With a glass of champagne
To celebrate his thriving
Politics of the day

Trapped

Bittersweet oppression
Slowly drowns her spirit
Her voice an echo
That resonates in nothingness

Laws ridiculed
By male order

Tradition a pretext
To kill her inner core

Violent memories
Erase expectation
As her empty soul
Fulfills everyday chores

Mended liaisons
Caused by fatal conviction
Of her own unworthiness
Predict novel calamity

Eyes averted
In convenient ignorance
Preserving the image
Of a sane world

World Elapsed

Her identity burned in the struggle
With the flames went her faith
Her house and her future
A shack she calls home
To raise generations without hope

Her children killed by disease
Nurtured in states' denial
Smoothly raping the country
In rapid multiplication
Mass murdering the nation

Her existence dictated
By handily forgotten promise
Tables turned only for few
Leaving the masses
Paralyzed by the past

Her wrinkled hands stir water
In pretense to boil food
Until her grandchild falls asleep
Worn out from hostile life
That does not provide

© **Kristin Palitza - South Africa**

Ziek

Hij: Ik hou van jou
en hoe de angst
je ziel weerspiegelt
in je grote ogen.
Het windt me op,
het slaan en schoppen,
te kleuren, zonder
mededogen,
in rood en paars
en blauw...
Ik hou van jou.

Zij: Jij houdt van ' jij
en van de kick,
jouw slagen houd ik buiten.
M' n h arin overdrive,
demp ik in de dieperik.
Ik sla mijn armen,
honderdmaal,
rondom mij...
zo bumper-ik.
' Ben ik nog normaal?'

Hij: Ik hou van jou
en hoe de vrees
je geest
in labyrinten deelt.
Het maakt me
hongerig naar
nog meer groffe taal,
soms lijfelijk
en soms verbaal.
Het spel voor mij
dat nooit verveelt.
Ik hou van jou.

© Lani - Belgium

Zingende vogel

In de diepte van je verbeelding
ligt de zolder met de schatten
die je als kind daar hebt opgeborgen.

Eenzame stilte zet die deur op een kier
Noodt je, om in herinnering te toeven.

De stoffige koffers bevatten de kleding van je jeugd,
de tafels en stoelen, staan weer in de kamer van je ouders.
Een versleten schemerlamp werpt een ander licht,
op verhalen die vroeger indrukwekkend leken.

Waar is dat kind gebleven?
dat speelde met veel te grote schoenen
en bruidssluiers maakte uit Mamas' oude gordijnen.

Zingt het nog op de schommel van de eenzaamheid?
Of staart het de vogels na, die uit de tuin der herinnering opstijgen?
Dromend dat het ooit de muren kan ontvluchten die de wereld buitensluiten?

Waar is het kind gebleven? Dat later vrij wou zijn.

Ze liep de wereld in met armen vol met dromen
tot ze struikelde over de hinderlagen van het leven.
De scherven sneden wreed het onschuldig blanke vlees.
De wonden waren diep, de littekens voor ' t leven.

Verminkt door al te harde waarheid
mankte ze verder weg van huis.
Verbrande bruggen stonden jaren
tussen haar en het ouderlijk huis.

Opnieuw alleen, gevangen tussen andere muren
zoekt ze opnieuw de schommel en de vogels.

De zoektocht leidt langs vreemde wegen
en met een omweg komt ze thuis,
waar niemand meer woont
en ook de zolder leeg is achtergebleven.

Daar staat ze, kijkt het raam uit,
en ziet de vogels die de tuin ontstijgen,
dromend van een vlucht naar haar verleden.

Vanbinnen blijft ze stil.

Ze zingt weer op haar schommel
en sluit de wereld buiten voor haar verminkte leven.

De wonden helen veel te traag en jaren gaan verloren.
Pas als ze mensen ontmoet
die vertrouwen schenken zonder oordeel,
komt schoorvoetend haar vertrouwen terug.
Helpt de muren neer te halen
rond haar zonderling bestaan.

De zon begint te schijnen
in de veel te kleine tuin.
De muur breekt open.
Ze wandelt over puin en leed
en ziet een grote wereld opengaan.

Ouder, wijzer, rustiger geworden,
glimlacht ze om de schommel
en vliegt net als de vogels over muren.

Ze deelt haar zon met anderen
en zingt nu overal.
Haar schommel hangt op zolder
onder weer een ander licht.
De deur die op een kier stond,
draait nu rustig kriepend dicht.

© **Lilith Kenis - Belgium**

Nunca mas

I

In Ciudad Juarez,
in an open lot
a field hand
cutting down grass
stumbled over a young
womans' body
He thought he had tripped
onto a dumped bag of junk
when he heard
the flies buzzing
She lay face-up,
expressionless, naked
except for socks—her hands
bound with shoe laces
Close by, police found
two more bodies and five
female skeletons
Cuerpo uno, tres, ocho

II

Claudia Gonzales' mother
only recognized her daughter by
the ponytail and blouse
left on her bones
Months after
investigators shut down
their inspection of the lot,
two boys found a clump
of hair, womens' shoes,
ripped panties, and
Claudias' overalls
Her mother hugs them tight
as though Claudia lives inside

III

Cuerpo nueve, cuerpo
cincuenta, cuerpo cien,
cuerpo dos cientos,
cuerpo, cuerpo, cuerpo
Black numbered

pink wooden stakes testify
Since 1993, more than 300
girls and women
have turned up
with cracked skulls,
snapped necks, raped,
decomposed, shot, stabbed,
strangled. And sometimes
just bones
All thrown out
like used fast food wrappers

IV

When another broken body
is found,
production does not halt
at the malquiladoras
Everyday, more girls
and women arrive,
fill the empty spaces
on assembly lines
Mas y mas, mas y mas
More who cannot afford to
turn down a job paying
a dollar an hour More
who have to walk
across the desert alone

V

In a city where men do not go to jail
for beating and raping
their girlfriends and wives,
murderers can be choosy.
This one (or these guys)
mangled 80-90, so far
He takes factory workers
and school girls.
He chops their hair off,
carves their skin, slashes
their breasts. He likes slim
teen-aged girls with long dark hair
like Irma Monreal's only daughter
who was saving for her quinceñera
but did not make it home

before her fifteenth birthday
Instead of waltzing with her girl
on the dance floor, dust devils
swirl by as she prays
at Esmeraldas' grave site

VI

Mujeres conocidos muertos
Loved women murdered
Too many pink crosses
More than 300
Nine years
One city
Officials offered prophesies
live on T.V. A few blamed the dead
saying they wandered streets
dressed too revealingly
Presidente Fox made
promises
Suspects were arrested,
tortured to confess
The police announced
the cases solved
But the females
are still slaughtered

VII

These women are mis
hermanas. Our veins
cross the border
like Bridge of the Americas.
Am I naive to believe that
if they were born on this side,
if the killings happened here,
the count
could never get so high--
no matter that they are
brown and poor?

How many more families
have to tape photos
of their missing daughters
on storefront windows?
How many more crosses

planted in the desert dirt
Cuantos mas cuerpos?
How many more
screams ignored
until the mass murder
is stopped? Cuantos?

©Liz Gonzalez - Usa

Tres piezas de paz

(Scroll down for the English version)

Vendeme tres piezas de tu paz,
regresa cruzandote con mi camino,
sabete, que la noche en la frontera es mas oscura que otras,
y las cruces del pasado se olvidan demasiado pronto.
Prestame el caracol de tu oido,
que camine lento por las huellas del silencio,
por los laberintos de las almas que aun intentan volver a casa,
sin saber que han muerto ya,
y que en el interior de un cuarto de adobe
solo iluminan la penumbra los diamantes salados
de las madres que se quedaron secas y empolvadas, estatuas viejas,
mientras las cenizas de cutrocientas niñas destazadas se diluyen cotidianamente
sobre el asfalto anonimo, entre alitos indiferentes, y tu...
Mientras, tu, vendeme tres piezas de tu paz,
porque aqui no pasa nada.

Three pieces of peace

Sell me three pieces of your peace,
come back crossing my path,
you must know that the night at the border is darker than others,
and the crosses from the past are forgotten too soon,
lend me the snail of your ear,
may it walk slowly on the tracks of silence,
through the labyrinths of the souls that try to return home still,
without knowing that they have already died,
and inside of an adobes' room only salty diamonds illuminate the darkness
of the mothers that suddenly were left dry and dusty, old statues,
while the ashes of 400 lost girls dilute
day by day over the anonymous asphalt,
between indifferent breaths,
and you...
Meanwhile you,
sell me three pieces of your peace,
for here, nothing happens.

En las manos de dios

(Scroll down for the English version)

Extrañas visiones apocalipticas vienen a mi,
mientras intento atrapar suficientes palabras
para enclaustrarlas con mis ideas
percibo el olor a huesos,
los fragmentos de pensamientos que flotan como plumas de angeles,

inocentes y libres.
Tomo algunas y las degusto,
inevitablemente,
no puedo evitar el sentirme abandonada,
invadida con el ocre coraje del desierto que yo,
y muchos otros habitamos,
no puedo evitar sentir la angustia y el miedo
de una ciudad que devora la vida,
secreta y abiertamente,
silenciosa y estrepitosamente.
Sólo para matar dos veces.
Bajo la luz de un sol ardiente
que ciega la mente.
Gritos y llantos,
el infierno nunca se sintió tan cerca,
dejame cerrar los ojos para olvidarlo todo,
como todos lo hacemos,
tal como Dios quisiera hacerlo,
porque sus manos tienen demasiada sangre,
y El no puede salvarnos a todos.

In god his hands

Apocalyptic, strange visions, come as I try to grab enough words
to captivate my ideas,
I percibe the scent of bones,
the fragments of thoughts that float like angel feathers,
innocent and careless,
I grab a couple and taste them,
inevitably, cannot help to feel abandoned
invaded with the ocher anger of the dessert I and many more inhabit.
I cannot help to feel the anguish and fear of a city that devours life,
secretly and openly,
silently and loudly,
just to kill twice,
under the light of a burning sun that blinds the mind.
Cries and screams,
hell never fell so close,
let me shut my eyes to forget it all,
as we all do,
like God wished he could
for his hands have to much blood
and he can not save us all.

For sale

Wait!

Please...do not look away,
I have something for you,
look at me,
here is a body for sale,
feel this hair that keeps the essence of many nights,
a pair of eyes that could still discover many wonders,
a full mouth that has not dried out its' kisses,
the elegance of this necks naked lines,
I offer much on a silver platter,
the colors of the rainbow over this skin,
these pair of breasts that never fed,
a couple of hands that have not lost all of their caresses,
one belly hungry at the bottom for a different kind of meat,
this hidden place of battles called sex,
and two long legs...and two long legs.
I have a body for sale,
you can set the price,
It is all in this quiet, quiet white room
on these cold silver platter,
some of it scattered, next to other deaths.
It is used and tired I admit,
some hair was tore,
the eyes will never wake up again,
nor the mouth be wet anymore,
I know someone broke the neck,
and the skin holds old and new wounds,
the breast is wide opened,
and the hands lay like dead fish,
the belly can't regain the air to breath,
and the place called sex along with the two legs
lost its' final battle after many, many of them.
But please, do not look away,
this body is young still,
I still have so much to give.
Look at me,
Before they close this door forever
buy me a couple of seconds more,
let me think what could I have done to walk away from the chains of love-hate,
to save my self even when society cannot,
to stop turning the other cheek.
Give me a sentence of kind words I never heard,
take me away.
I still had so much to give.

A thousand faces

How many faces are there in this city?
How many strangers and how many known
as you walk along the dirty sidewalk?
How many will see you everyday
far beyond the mask we use in our everyday carnival?
And I wonder if it has always been like this
or if time has made us change;
I suppose no one could really tell
because every time we believe we are growing
and building a better place
we keep forgetting where to put ourselves.
Houses and fences are not enough to keep us apart,
we no longer look inside anybody's eyes,
we no longer care to ask why,
we no longer think we can change the way of minds
for something more than to gain a coin or two,
we no longer see the tears or the bruises on another one's skin,
we do not hear any cries for help,
and cannot feel any feelings far from the ones' on tv,
an unfair death does not make us weep;
as we grow we lose our abilities to hold,
love, kiss, speak, wait, hope, dream, give,
run, wake up, smile, understand, think, believe,
be, live.
I guess we assume we are too many to reach out,
too helpless to help,
too used to swim in our own suffering,
too attached to an imposed destiny.
Maybe it has always been like that.
How many faces are there in this city?
How many strangers and how many known
as you walk along the dirty sidewalk?
And how many will you see everyday
far beyond the mask we use in our everyday carnival?

© **Liza di Georgina - México.**

Order of protection

It could be typed by a child:
ORDER OF PROTECTION

flimsy piece of paper meant to be
a shield
a barrier
a defense.

Oh yes, Mr. Lawmaker, of course it works!
Just ask the lady with her brains blown out
all over the used car she was just about to sell;
hers was neatly tucked into her purse,
as safe and sound as she thought it made her.
Her husband pulled the trigger, and
there was not a drop of blood on her
ORDER OF PROTECTION!

Just ask the girl who was chopped up
and buried all over her suburban neighborhood;
hers was in the pocket of her Calvins. Had she time
to pull it out, I am sure her boyfriend would have taken flight,
his axe and insanity held off yet again.. After all, it is an
ORDER OF PROTECTION!

Just ask the woman who has moved a dozen times,
uprooting her kids, losing jobs, going broke,
simply to escape the wrath of a man enamoured of her;
hers was lost in move 5, perhaps 6. She was
too busy running to notice.
And she is still too busy running to stop for a new
ORDER OF PROTECTION!

Just ask me. Mine is right here by my side;
next to my gun.
Just in case the law doesn' t work....
again.

BANG

Oh yes, Mr. Lawmaker....

BANG!!!!

© Lori Williams - Usa

Praising grief

Eyes tight in blue pain.
Dislocated heart denys
yet cries confirming the agony.
Why?
Grief like daggers
wrench hearts from vessels.
Tear blood from blood,
dragged up through the throat
to the mouth and out.
Burst forth as a million wasps
to sting every nerve.

But yet:
love swims in those pools
of salted stinging tears.
Without passion
there is no pain.
Without sorrow
no power to love.
We lose our hearts
with no guarantee of return.
Grief releases love.....
welcome.

Wedding ring

I cannot move my arm today
You stupid bitch
And my vision is a little blurred
You stupid bitch
It is hot and sunny outside
But I will stay indoors
Can you not do anything right?
And I will make dinner perfect tonight
And lay the table exactly
Nothing out of place
You ugly cunt, ugly and stupid
It hurts to walk
But I will not limp or stumble
You are a fucking mess
Knocking at the door
She asks me to leave him
You are nothing without me
She asks me to go with her
She does not understand

I will kill your whole pathetic family
I have to go shower
Have to get clean

I remember

With this ring I thee wed
With this ring I control

© **Lorraine Kelly - UK-Canada**

Ostinato

De wind huilt zijn monotone lied
ze schreit
haar ziel vermoord
zijn gore doffe ogen

De wind suist zijn ééntonige melodie
ze staart
haar mond nu dood
en traanklieren die drogen

De wind ruist zijn torenhoge noot
ze ziet
liefde vermoord
met gekreun als wiegende bomen

De wind slaat haar deuren dicht
ze loopt
haar stem verloor
de kracht van het geloven

De wind heeft haar in zijn macht
een overdosis
verloste haar
drie weken na die nacht.

Verlangen

Daar lag ze met haar
bebloed gezicht
en prevelde :

"Als de zandman nog eens komt
zal ik bloemen zoeken
bloemen met rood, geel, groen en blauw
terwijl de viool innig
haar wiegenlied speelt."

Verborgene gedachten

De zilte beweegt geruisloos om zich
heen en klapt het ritme van
verloren gewaande slagen

KRIMP
SPRING

en vang de glimp
van een canon
verborgen in de slag
van een arm

Vier de sprong
die je won

en langgerekte gedachten
gonzen geestdriftig op
de gezegende grond.

© **Luc Morren - Belgium**

Trying to learn to ricochet,
off the walls and
back of hands,
but never will I recuperate,
from this nasty land.
A bow of the head and the quickness ensues
I will learn my lesson from him and from you.
No one stops this lesson you teach,
this remedy through force that you stand and you preach,
Mother learned her lesson,
now she behaves
tougher skin I inherited the scars I convey.
My actions, my posture the rage that is within I will not pass this on
This must not spread
This must now end.

© Lucas Clements - Canada

Sra. Kahlo

Frida, donde estas mujer. . .
Where are you?
You died for our sins,
promising us the resurrection,
a rebirth
our self-worth intact.

We had only to bury you,
release you
and that monkey
on your back.

You jangled and giggled
a beautiful, moist jewel. . .
twenty silver bangles
singing
from each wrist.

Your blinding white camellias
sitting like a crown,
your hibiscus red-orange lips
calling us forth to watch
you sweep your men,
your pain
into a pile
there - in the center
of your world.

And you laughed, Frida
knowing to do so
would hurt.
You gathered your breath, Frida
knowing to do so
would hurt.
You exhaled loudly
a breath of raw perfume

A fire that stained
a hundred canvas flags
and sent your name
flying
across the ages. . .
a mad Mexican dove
who seeks
only to soothe women

who hurt.

Women who hurt.

El grito

El Paso de Juárez
Impossible to believe the desert
will forever hold oozing secrets
for armies of whirling evil,
for those whose lies
flow like annihilating lava.

El Paso de Juárez
Impossible to believe
our women dread to walk alone,
knowing that more than a cool breeze
follows at their back,
Fear is the thick shroud weighing
heavily on slender, brown shoulders.

El Paso de Juárez
Impossible to believe
to imagine
their screams,
their terror as it fills
long, black nights
before they die alone,
impossible to believe!

El Paso de Juárez
Impossible to believe that
night after night
even 'La Llorona'
rises to wander and wail,
to search for her lost soul
and sees nothing
and says nothing!

El Paso de Juárez
sin ojos, no tenemos alma
without eyes, we have no soul
sin manos, no tenemos fuerza
without hands, we have no strength
sin grito, no tenemos futuro
without one voice, we have no future!
El Paso - one step

Juárez - one cry must awaken us.

© **Lucina - Mexico-Usa**

From the play “Daddy meets Durga”

Call to bear arms

Help slay the Buffalo Demon
Bring your best arms
your poetry
your spear

your fire
your art

your spiders
your dreams

Help Slay the Buffalo Demon

provide your vision
of destroying the terror underneath
where you walk every day
where the sidewalk
moves with violence of the day

where your voices have been sent to
execution
punished for their life

where it still smells
of fetid masculinity
of the worst kind

based on God the Father
acted out by boys
with nervous wallets or guns

sometimes 40, 50 year old boys
who write long words
to protect their laws

They all resemble Daddy
in one way or another
They all take a life from me.

The one in my belly
or in my song

The one I had as a girl

or maybe older

It was not given
It was stolen

in the ugliest of ways
with weapons and force
A threat that tonight
maybe you will be
extinguished
much faster than how you came.

Help Slay the Buffalo Demon

Bring Your Best Arms

Never take it lightly

It is never to be taken lightly
This raised hand
struck across our skin.

Never
take it lightly
This festered contempt
amongst our men.

He may be your father
He may be your husband
He may be your lover
while making love
even pretending
to hurt but

never
take it
lightly.

At the first sign
of vileness
smothered in passion.
Do not excuse it
so politely.

Never take it lightly.

Your daughter
Your mother
Your sister

Cannot learn to take it
in the eye
on the face
with the skin
Cannot learn to live with it
sometimes for 60 years

never take it lightly

Cause what he does in the bedroom
will be what he will do in the boardroom
will be what he will do in the big boys' room
will be what he will do with your womb

So send them away
Away from your skin

Until they too
will no longer
Take It

Lightly.

© Margaret Kruszewska - Polish-American

Remembrance Day

today I remembered
a toddler led up
a Calton close
sweeties shoved into
her four year old hands
while Frank rubbed
his ten year old thing
between her thighs

today I remembered
a child falling asleep
at the age of nine
in the home of
the elderly man
she trusted as a friend
till he forced his fingers
inside her knickers

today I remembered
a teenager out
on a routine date
who found herself
being callously raped
the guy in question
not asking but simply
demanding sex

today I remembered
a young assistant
summoned to attend
a meeting strangely
bereft of associates
just she and her boss
with his most
unbusinesslike agenda

today I remembered
the various women
I have counselled
friends and strangers alike
whose skin and bones
and hearts and minds
have been broken
some beyond repair

today I remembered
the numerous girls
I have worked with
paranoid, anorexic
suicidal weans*
abused and tortured
by grown men
related to them

today I remembered
why I cannot
quell my rage
why I am so insistent
so fucking in your face
about our right to live
without fear or threat
of sexual violence

today I remembered
and now
I am reminding you
lest you forget

Remembrance Day = British Commemoration day for the war dead

*weans, Glasgow dialect = children

Buckies, blades and bloody nightmares

the bright
beautiful
creature
you are
resists
creates a nest
of little comfort
amid the shite

surrounds
a fragile self
with tokens
rare memories
hopeful books
on a crooked shelf
yet cannot eclipse
the present blight

disappear piles
of soiled clothes
decaying food
festering cans
or the scattered
scraps of words
screaming
in desperate flight

Buckies, blades
and bloody nightmares
consuming all
the bright
and beautiful
creature you are
your story old
as history

repeated

repeated

grasp one
of many
hands held out
by others who have
known your plight
but refused to
yield their lives
to bloody nightmares

Buckies and blades
offer scant relief
no escape
it is easy to run
much harder to hide
the bright
beautiful
creature you are

Buckies = Buckfast, a cheap, strong liquor consumed by troubled teenagers

© Margaret McQuade McAuslan

Death came slow

death came slow
a final release
from pain
from disbelief

how did this happen
what did I do
why
no rescue
except in deaths'
embrace

where is my
mother
where is my
brother

alone
I
rest
with my murdered
sisters

body exposed
empty eyes gaze
toward home
empty

bones
picked clean
some broken
blue purple
skin
rots away

help
help me
please stop
help me please

find me
bring me home
save
my
living

sisters

Silent

The breaking dawn is silent
As the glass smashes to the floor

The sun stands silent
As the door slams once more

The raging eyes are silent
As the fists are formed

No words will soothe the fury
As fists beat upon the wall

The smell of burnt toast is silent
The cause of it all

© **Marcia Borell - Usa**

Crimson Petal

A song and a dance
and a softly
oozing cut
because
she has had all the beauty
that she can stand.

"Let me love you"

(smile)

So graceful -
her hands placed
at the side of her
face

"It is you that I want"

(bleed)

A touch
so soft it is barely felt
her need to bleed
her only saving grace

"I needed to see your face, one last time"

(smile)

A disappearing
phantom embrace
that once had gripped her
lost to the puddle lain
beneath

"You are perfect."

(bleed)

A crimson petal
lay beside her
warming her
soothing her

"Your body is perfect"

(smile)

beauty cultivated
in a smile
she rests her curls
on her bed
one last time
letting the last of the beauty
that was within her
drain onto the sheet beneath

irony swept to her
in the perfect flower
of red
that bloomed there in.

© Marie Huskey - Usa

Dark days night descent

enter the dense night bravely
beauty
as a darkness descends on another day
lacking the lightness of youth
innocence separated
engulfed into the depths
of rest eternal

© Marques Vickers - Usa

I heard the coyotes
yapping
but no one
answered us.

© **Melinda Crider - Usa**

One Night

Hard-bitten night,
a black of the mind fantasy -
cum East of San Francisco reality,
beat a new blueprint of me.

In the gloom of pylons I was
a dove under the Dunbarton Bridge;
where men ran fire opals
down my thighs.

I became their fluid hours
measured in thrusts and bangs.
Clocks rang, and I flew,

free, across bay salt flats,
at last, as mud thick with clams
sucked off my shoes.

Joy, in the burn of a cigarette,
washed bloodsuck and come from a mouth
split wide in redemption.

© **Melisande Luna - Usa**

Juárez

Dry country surrounds you,
a desert from which fear creeps
every night, through cracks in favela walls,
into womens' hearts.

It comes with the wind panting
a hundred names: María, Teresa, Janeth,
the names of those who cried tears
the colour of blood,

whose bones splintered in the hands
of men, self-righteous and cruel.
Juárez, your wells run dry,
your colorful gardens wilt.

In this place, even childrens' laughter
has ceased to be innocent.

© **Michaela A. Gabriel - Austria**

Wounded eyes

Eyes that pierce to your
very soul and ask
why did I go to bed hungry
why did you not protect me
why did you abuse me
in my little fragile
heart and soul

Eyes that ask
who will make my world
a place where I
can be safe
and who will
make these eyes fill with joy
instead of fear and
terror and tears

Tiny eyes that show strength
even when times
are cruel and mean and tough
and little eyes
that ask what did I do
to make you abandon me
when i needed you

These are the eyes
that will haunt us
and leave us ashamed
if we do not advocate
for those who are
too small to demand
justice and peace

© Michelle Epperson - Usa

I do not know your name

I cried last night
The first time about this moment
A moment in time you took from me
No, not took ... you ripped from me
I pay the price for your actions
I live with the results of your previous choices
I did not ask to ever see your face
Yet in the night did you come to me
Ripped me away
Hid me in a dark dank place
Brutalized and tore away what little I had rebuilt
I do not know your name

Forever you will be that dark face, mean and hideous
The hours are enough to torment me for years to come
Yet you may have left a demon
A horrid fatal demon in your wake
I cried last night
I do not know your name

Life was looking up
Going forward, new beginnings
Un-sinking that sunken ship
Yes that is what I was doing
Working so hard
Now I face YOUR vile demon
I do not know what the answer is
Right now it is just a torment
A battering in the mind
Hopes and dreams put on hold
How terribly unfair that you
Can play around in my head
I do not know your name

I cried and grieved and let lose some of my anger
I am angry and wounded
You may have signed my death sentence
All for what? Why? To what purpose were your actions?
Why did you choose me to violate?
Why stumble upon my path?
Your demon, that may become my own
And then I would have to live with you, every day
I do not even know your name!

Dicen que la niña ha vuelto

(Scroll down for the English translation)

tarde de luna temprana
calles llena de gente
callejones de penumbra
la niña camina sola

ojos turbios la persiguen
oculta la cara fea
¡la niña camina sola
con ojos que la persiguen!

la escuela ya está muy lejos
la casa se acerca lenta
los ojos ya tienen manos
la niña camina sola

paredes que se entrechocan
parecen garganta oscura
los pasos ya se apresuran
la niña camina sola

salto de olas furiosas
estruendo de sofocado terror
las manos buscan la carne
de la niña que andaba sola

aliento de fragua quemada
endurecido pene de fuego
busca atrevido las piernas
la niña sola en el suelo

busca desgarrar atraviesa
agudo dolor de espadas
corta a la niña vencida
la niña vejada sola

Hace rato que la luna
ya puebla la noche entera.
La gente busca a la niña
entre sollozos de pena.

¡Las madres trenzan sus manos

para proteger a sus hijas
los padres sofocan gemidos
que cortan más que cuchillos!

La gente ahogándose grita
¡aquí la niña que viene
trayendo la falda blanca
cubierta de sangre negra!

La gente llora diciendo
la niña tiene lágrimas secas
en las azules mejillas
abiertas en huesos rotos.

¡Dicen que la niña corre
silencio enredado en el pelo
abiertos ojos perdidos
que cubren manos llenas de gritos!

y la niña que viene mira
enloquecida de asombro
semen y sangre corriendo
entre sus piernas heridas.

¡Aquí la niña que viene!
¡Basta ya!

They say the girl has come back

evening with an early moon
the streets full of people
the alleys of dark gloom
the girl walks alone.

troubled eyes pursue her
hidden the ugly face
the girl walks alone
joined by eyes that pursue her!

school is now far away
home draws slowly nearer
the eyes by now have hands
the girl walks alone

Walls that close in and clash
seem like a dark throat
steps now in a hurry

the girl walks alone.
a leap of furious waves
a gasping in stifled terror
the hands searching the flesh
of the girl who walked alone

a breath of scorched anvil
a hardened penis of fire
daring to search the legs
of the girl thrown to the ground

it searches rips open pierces
the swords' sharp pain
slashes the girl now conquered
the violated girl alone

For a while the moon has
peopled the entire night
the village looked for the girl
with sorrowful sobbing

The mothers braid together their hands
try to protect their daughters
fathers smother their cries
that cut sharper than their knives!

Choking, the people scream
here the girl comes now!
wearing her skirt of white
covered in wretched black blood

Crying, the people exclaim
see the girl its dried tears
on her cheeks turned blue
split open by broken bones

They say the girl is running
silence tangled in her hair
glazed eyes open
covered by handfuls of screams!

and the girl that comes back looks
crazed by the sight
of bloody semen running

between her wounded legs.
here the girl comes now!

Violación

(Scroll down for the English translation)

tropezando
caminando por la noche estrangulada
estrangulada la voz de resistencia
ella
la que oyó el susurro
y cayó a tierra empujada por detrás
ella
caminando por la noche estrangulada
violada
ella
la que cayó empujada por detrás
tropezando
caminando por la noche estrangulada
no sabe
que los jueces más tenaces
decretan
que ella
caminaba sola por la noche
y la condenan a la noche estrangulada.

Rape

stumbling
walking through the night strangled
strangled her voice of resistance
she
who heard the rustling noise
and fell to the ground pushed from behind
she
strangled walking through the night
raped
she
who fell pushed from behind
stumbling
walking through the night strangled
does not know
that the most severe judges
will decree
that she
was walking alone through the night

and they sentence her to the night strangled.

Translator, Elizabeth Gamble Miller

© **Nela Rio - Canada**

I am waiting till he loves me

I am waiting till he loves me.
Because I know that he will.
He treats me really bad
but sometimes he treats me like a queen.
I am embarrassed to say
it does more bad than good
but he will cave
someday
I prayed that he would.

My friends tell me
I am crazy
because they say
they would not stay.
But they are not in my shoes
so they would not know what to do.
Sure I am emotionally on life support
but it will all end
because one day
he is going to love me
I guess.
Yes, he will.

Thank you doctor,
for listening.
Sure he hits me
but he cares.
I know you think
I should leave him
before he kills me one day.
But do you not know that I need him?

People just do not understand
I love him
and that is all there is to it.
One day
I will be ok.
The day when he will love me

But I love him

"But I love him.
My heart wants to hate you
But I can not.
I hate what you did

But I love you still"

is the mind of a woman
that is being abused every day
either mentally or physically
she is shattered and lonely
scared to move on.
She is trying to escape
the thoughts in her mind.
Her self-esteem is damaged.
In her eyes she feels like she is nothing
and no one can change it.
So she stays with the one that
does not love
because she believe there is no other
no matter what he does.
Her frame of mind is on
"But I love him"

© Omega Makeece Berry - Usa

He was Strong
He was proud, he was strong
One day, she did not follow his dreadful commands
He beat her, again and again,
Until her tears ran dry

They learned, his son, his daughter and her
To fear his presence by night and by day
A moonless night, while asleep,
They silently left

He became his only companion
In the dark and alone
His strength, made him weak

© Pablo Weisz-Carrington - Usa

Shadows of the past

Daily I walk down the long corridors.
Head and shoulders down, I trod lonely halls.
But today a chance movement caught my eye,
Dimly I saw shadows along the walls.
I looked once again and the shadows moved.
As I stared closely they came into focus.
The specters of children who are long dead .
Their haunted eyes watching as we pass by.
Todays' trial will draw no crowds to watch.
The victim was only an unknown child.
No media frenzy to draw a crowd.
For no rich mans' darling was this little one.
Today the " victims " press into the court.
They fill the benches and stand in the aisles,
And only I have noticed their presence,
As they wait and pray for some small justice.
To most they are but shadows of the past.
No one wept tears when they too were murdered,
But I watch as they silently gather,
Their haunted eyes filled with tears and sorrow.

The Light of Hope

Battered, beaten, hiding faces,
muffled screams interrupt the night.
Beaters, murders, rapists too,
in the darkness no one sees them.

Women and children tormented
bodies and spirits bruised and torn.
This darkness comes not with the night
but lives with those who refuse to see.

Remove the blinders of indifference,
open your eyes and look around.
Feel the pain of those you are seeing
help us fight this darkness of man.

For true evil hides in darkness,
shunning light to hide in shadow.
Open wide the windows of your souls
let light shine within the darkness.

Bringing hope to those in danger,
perhaps a chance to yet survive.

Within the light of heartfelt caring
lies the hope of all mankind.

The Color of Music

She looks in the mirror and gasps in dismay,
then quickly closes eyes full of unshed tears.
Perhaps if she waits a little while longer,
and looks again the colors will have faded.

Thrumming swollen fingers on the table top,
she waits and silently prays for a miracle.
Wincing with pain she opens her swollen eyes,
the vibrant colors almost seem to hollar.

Vivid purples in varying hues cry out,
older bruises faded now will softly speak,
and the fading yellow can only whisper,
a simple tune, now a song of violence.

Her shoulders slumping her tears begin to fall,
knowing full well that later this evening,
she will hear the crashing drums and clanging cymbals,
her husbands tune of drunken rage played on her.

© Pamela Colling - Usa

Hermanas de Juarez

[Para Las Hermanas Who Were Murdered in Juarez]

Hermanas,
hijas,
madres,
comadres,
primas,
nietas,
slim mujeres de bronce,
palo largo
y negro,
they glide thru la noche,
rushing home from work,
free from stale factory air,
their hearts are filed con carino por familia,
thoughts that flow from Juarez
to Puebla, Chiapas, Sonora, Chihuahua,
they are young,
con esperanzas,
suenos de manana on their eyes,
but there are men,
duendes en mascararas,
who hate and desire these women,
sin respeto,
sin alma,
they hunt in shadow of darkness,
hide in corners,
spring out with silent scream,
murder the sangre of our creators,
there is no mercy
in this tearing of skin,
ripping of flesh,
there is no conscience
in these breath-takers,
no remorse for their murders,
las hermanas de Juarez
lay bare and dreamless
in fields and rivers,
sin nombres,
their faces are strangers in this place,
that even La Muerte has deserted in fear,
they are discovered at dawn,
by garbage collectors,
other hermanas rushing to work,
their bodies are harvested
like weeds of the field,

limp and damp from mornings' dew,
cameras flash,
hungry for flesh,
daily parade of blurred faces,
las hermanas are stacked in neat rows,
marked by dates, no mas,
where they lay forgotten and voiceless,
somewhere a madre,
an abuelita,
knows their name,
somewhere they light candles,
hoping la luz
will discover the face of their invisible hija.

Tres Mas

uno, dos, tres,
it used to be so easy to count
when we were young,
we counted apples.
piñas,
centavos,
these things never had a face
or a breath,
now we count breathless women,
their lungs are flat
and quiet,
how do we count the dead,
their eyes pleading por justicia,
for their name to be recognized.

Flight from genocide

On a poster protest by Malaquias
Montoya of Jo Ann Yellow Bird
kicked in the stomach by Gordon,
Nebraska pig - 9/15/76 - 2 months
later her son, Zintkalazi, was born
dead.

Malaquias - tus ojos son
gritos, hablan con tu
sangre, tu corazon y
hablan la verdad.

Zintkalazi,

child of
Jo Ann Yellow Bird,
became an eagle
just before the kick,
just before the Gordon, Nebraska pig
murdered the mother' s cradle
of Jo Ann Yellow Bird,
before it splintered
into shattered stars
and filled the sky
with long wailing lagrimas,
mourning and celebrating
the birth of Zintkalazi
Yellow Eagle Child,
now flying
with his creator.

Suenos Del Mar ~
Dreams Of The Sea

Mis suenos del mar,
my dreams of the sea,
flow within me,
como olas,
waves,
a tide that takes me
back to birth,
journey to this place called mujer,
women,
I have been many spirits,
know the languages
of forest and mountain,
sky and water,
fire and earth,
I have moved without legs,
felt la tierra cool my belly,
sang to my sister moon,
stalked my future ancestors,
I have moved to this place
that soon may be memory,
absorbed into mis suenos del mar,
there is no myth in my power,
I dream reality upon the earth,
flowing determination of Lilith,
is river of my blood,
that sings across broken bones of lost children,
soothes my brothers unnamed anger,

I survive mutilation,
long list of anonymous rapes,
I feel my grandmothers dance behind my eyes,
their footsteps,
lightning on a dark and twisted path,
I find strength in mis hermanas
and daughters who grow
in gardens of my heart' s song,
I have been blessed with wings,
discover them beneath my skin,
watch them break free from hesitation
that was a chain around this breath,
I and we,
move into a dreaming sky,
rejoice in winds' caress,
choice of our flight,
we carried our dreams
up rock faced walls of impossibility,
thru parched desert,
unforgiving space,
we are healers of a wounded earth,
split skin of a fearful heart,
we are daughters of moon,
caresser of fear,
liberators of pain,
soft mist that brings peace,
our deep eyes sing ancient mysteries,
our hands bathe you in old rhythms,
thru our struggles,
we lay against each other,
music bends us like supple willows,
we are breath of our abuelitas,
we dance history,
circle of embraces on soft earth floor,
wind is our song,
twisting in pain
to discover injustice covered with lies,
our song is the past,
future,
now,
blending,
soft breath breeze,
river flowing memories,
dreams,
visions,
sounds,
touch in passion,

in peace,
hermanas,
sisters,
moving thru layers of images,
between life and death,
occurrence and wish,
where no border exists,
except a frozen teardrop,
reminder of love,
giver of courage that melts
into our dreams of the sea,
mis suenos del mar.

© Phil Goldvarg - Usa

Purple

Still while our beautiful boy
swam in the dark red of my belly,
you marked my breasts purple yellow

Stroked corn-silk hair of our babies,
then dragged me from the belly of sleep
with your fist and
the palm of your hand

Pushing against hate and shame,
beating an elaborate tattoo on flesh and bone,
skin blooming into flowers
of knowledge and silence

You did not even ask my forgiveness
but waited instead for the
redemption of morning

© **Pippa Brush Uk-Usa**

Collective guilt

Bruised and battered, bleeding,
who counts up the cost?
Of the many women.
in the legions of the lost.

Seduced,abused and murdered
abandoned then at will.
How can society tolerate
these macho brutes who kill?

Where are the protectors,
guardians of the law?
Are women so inferior,
they are not worth caring for?

It does not seem to matter,
to the powers that be.
That such suffering is widespread.
Who cares, now the bitch is dead?

Next one may be your daughter,
your sister or your wife.
Is it not time we made a stand
to protect every womans' life ,

We cannot change human nature,
there is no reason why.
Civilised societies.
Should not make a try.

© poeticpiers (I.E.Hogg) - Uk

Abstract

Experiences to learn from,
many lessons from which to gain,
I keep my heart and mind open,
I realize that no one is exempt from pain.

You side with a man
that has inspired you,
and lied to you.
You know not
what you do.

On the other side of the world,
a long time ago,
the voice of a little girl
crying
woke you from dreams
you cannot remember.

The shrill
of pain
that came
from her throat,
you hear it in the night,
still.

There are abstract reasons,
hidden in the paintings
of every day.

Things happen,
life happens,
and rarely is it kind.

I am just trying
to get on with being me,
and leave the haunting past behind,
yes, I am going to leave
that haunting past behind me.

Ice pick

It is as if he can sense
my vulnerabilities.
Smell them, even.

Deer caught
in the headlights,
nowhere to run,
to hide
from the ghost
of childhood past.
It has come
to claim me.

I had asked
the magic questions
only hours ago,
while speaking with my Father.
‘How can you forgive someone
that has never
said that they were sorry?
Never owned up
to the heartbreak
that they inflicted?
The precious trust
that they destroyed?’

‘Do not be surprised ’, he had said.

Five hours later,
alone, scared and off-guard,
The ringing phone
breaks the brick silence
like an ice pick
hitting the block.
This time,
it is him.

Fifteen years.
He waited
fifteen damned years
to call me and apologize.
Suddenly so sorry
that he
robbed me
of my innocence.

Could he truly be sorry
that I had suffered
because he couldn't
keep his hands off of
little girls?

His words hung in my air
for hours.

“You were my world,
you, of all people,
I never meant to hurt you,
I mean YOU,” he said.

I tell myself
that this
is only another thing,
just another thing
to get through.

But in truth,
this is THE
thing
to get through.

I look up,
see the reflection
in the cobalt
gazing ball.

A broken little girl,
curled up
in anger and anguish.

I look down
at my knuckles,
crimson red
from the heart ache
balled tightly in my fist.

In limbo

The line of reality
washes away
sands bordering
ocean shoreline
succeeding only
in further deterioration
the feeling more concrete
that we on the brink
of something larger,
not yet crystallized
my mind visits foreign lands,
previously unconsidered

my soul resides in limbo,
wanting to trust again
those things I took for granted
I cannot hate my brother,
but I fear Cain's rage
washing away
my shoreline
I walk the distorted edge of madness
wanting to know the answers,
but discover none.

Monsters live near

Hey little girl,
I know your world,
I know you want to get away,
want to escape.
It is not right,
but you do not fight,
no one cares what you do,
and he pays attention to you.
Everyone around you
turns a blind eye to the abuse,
even when they know,
they refuse to accept the truth.
I recognize the cry,
but do not know any better than you
oh sweet child, why...
why----?
One day, sister
one day, friend
women and children
will be respected,
innocence will be protected,
and we will no longer live in fear
of the monsters that live so near.
Hey, sweet baby
I know it is hard
to watch yourself from afar,
because reality is just too hard
to take
well knowing you,
and what you have gone through,
makes my heart ache for you,
I think of that place,
and the innocent expression
stolen from your face.

Authors Note: For Brooke & all abused children that have no one brave enough to stand up for them.

© **Rachelle Wiegand - Usa**

Maria Gallardo

Naranja dulce limón partido,
Maria yo te conocía,
oh yes I knew you.

I knew you when - when you and I
used to go to different schools together.

Yes...yo te conocía - Maria.

I knew you when - when my suenos
were the color of a salsa picante
And castañedas clicked in my head
like crickets dressed like mariachis
in hot summer nights.

Yo te conocía - Maria

I knew you Maria - when el cucuyo,
el mentado chamuco hid
underneath my bed and scratched the
floor with his diablo fingernails.
and you protected me while I hid
underneath the blankets - las cobijas
and ate pinole like
a holy Eucharist one last time.

Yo te conocía, Maria,

Oh yes I knew you
when you laid with the gachopin -
the false feathered serpent - Cortes
and freed me from
the oppression of Tonatiuh and Tezcatlipoca
gods of worlds I never knew

Yo te conocía - Maria.

When you freed me forever
from the altares that held my beating corazón
as I waited for a resurrection that never came.
And I condemned you Malinche?

I knew you Maria - yo te conocía.

When el mundo was coming to an end

with the rain fire of Quiauntonatium
y la noche...the night escurriría
you stood ready with your doble cananas.
Your bandoleers and your woman's scorn.
You and Adelita- and beat a chingasos
El gachopin's butt - his culo.

Yo te conocía Maria...I knew you when.

When you waited at the kitchen table
en la cocina for me to return,
from barrio wars that were not mine
in prayer - La Bamba blaring
through the night and I came home
loco por la mota y el caballo
the elixir of my oppressive Azteca Gods

Yo te conocía...Maria

I knew you Maria and watched you
when you shackled yourself to the hot cocina
stove le estufa and made tortillas de amore
that I ate with mantequilla.
And you worn that same old apron,
stained with the past memorias
of meals prepared with love for me.

Yo te conocía...

I knew you when Maria - And even
when the sun promised never to return.
Still you said to me, close your eyes,
and you filled them with pan dulce.
And you hugged me singing,
Naraja dulce limon partido
dame un abrazo que yo te pido.

I knew you Maria - Gallardo Yo te conocía.

And I never thanked you, gave you las gracias
But las palabras failed me. Pero siempre yo fui
muy pendejo - mea culpa.

© **Rafael Melendez - Mexico**

Mis cosas favoritas

another perspective

Prologue:

Goodness has a thousand faces,
Malevolence, some believe,
has a thousand more.
And many of them
mock us south of the border.

Look at this face.
It is one of them.
Look hard. Be not cowed.
It will stare at you one day
unless you deal with it, now.

When she begged for mercy,
that was a favorite thing.
But I wanted more, you see.
I wished her groveling at my feet
the fear of me--and my knife--complete.
That pleased me, another favorite thing.

I do this on dusty, trash-strewn flats
South of the city, no one around
to hear her screams, to stop me, Whack!
From knocking her down.
That was heaven, another favorite thing.

My power was absolute,
me, a sly nobody
sure got someones' attention, as would any brute
that day, and the next, and the next.
I plucked these other bodies
from street corners
with offers of free rides.

I exploited them, sure.
Many were glad to save a bus or taxi buck,
And I was there with a lure
to hell in a culverts' dry muck.
Almost my favorite of favorite things.

Why almost? The best thing was

no one else cared.
Politicians, cops, employers...
They had priorities, their own favorite things.
And these chicks were everywhere.
I got ' freebees , frankly speaking,
Because nobody but ME cared.

That was my most favorite thing.

© **Robert Proctor - Usa**

Throwing caution to the wind

Yellow is for caution
the dead dried rose on your empty coffin said
or, rather – meant.

Your yellow handkerchief with the rainbow embroidered
edge is dirty now. Forever left behind.
Husband, children, family, will not wash
this memory of you.
It's all they have the last hold
you held onto

before you and over 300 women in
Cuidad Juárez disappeared into
a fury of serial sexual femicide.

Red is for life
the vibrant red rose held by your daughter said
or, rather – meant.

Women all over the world gather rose petals
for your little daughter, Martita.
Wild rose petals -- pink, yellow and red.
We make perfumed, soft water and
scent our handkerchiefs, let them blow in the wind.

Our square colored cloths carry a message
to those who consumed and disposed of
you, Rosa, and the other women:

Yellow, caution. All blood dries red.

Seeking Mother

Hear it hear the shatteredness

of glass
of bones
of dreams

the rumbling, the grinding of stones
turning on the wheels of time
heaving through the dark mass of father that held her down

hear it hear the mending

of beauty
of spirit
of dreams

She brings the pieces to her heart
it is time it is now
all see her the invisibility is visible
she lies down
in her own dark earth.

~ She always

finds a way ~

i.

I find my way after standing naked in a home frozen in fear
from facing fathers'
hatred for women, mothers, the girl who refused him.

He paved a road with my virgin blood.

He still follows that road to find me
screaming in the night.

Each morning I find myself

facing this.

ii.

a mother sits in a warm room
writing how sheets of freezing tears
can not stop the

daughter

whose

tears are harder than ice
they pound her with memories
colder than this with no road to reach her.

The daughter sits in a frozen field
welcoming Winters' embrace

each frozen tear blankets

her frantic footsteps
outside
of mothers' door.

iii.

On this Winter road I find
another deer hit and down.
She waits for me
doe eyes moist with pain.
I hold her as she sings her song of death
trusting she knows not all pave this road
with blood.

iv.

Your daughter gathers roadkills
while skating down Winters' road.
She feels the frozen ones buried
in the snow glides to them
with prayers of smoke, with sacred fire.

Tenderly she lifts
birds of ice, birds of stone.
She flies on gifted wings.

v.

For years, Mother, I have been
tossing stones

in front
behind
to the left and right of you

trusting if you stopped
for just one moment
your eyes would remember me

but never at you
for fear one would
pass straight through

vi.

Reflections

The sun sets
me running through the forest.
I have been taught to fear the night.

I tremble at these teachings
my fear slips out
follows my footsteps

breathes

each breath
I hold against myself

I feel my rigidity
and dance
to the rhythm of my heartbeat

© **Rose Konda - Usa**

Crosshairs

Targets of beautiful towering grace
Prey of the malformed minds
In the perilous mutations of species

Women are your children
They are your Mothers
They are your Sisters
And your Lovers

Annihilation stalks
Left to defend themselves
Alone, while they bury their dead

The horror in Ciudad Juarez
Tries to summon the paid protectors
But the incantation is mute

From the primitive throat
Would be torn the last call of defense
Had the protectors terminated the threats

Were humans one with the wild
They would not be defiled
For the pack would eliminate the insurgents

Where are the warriors
With honor so vast
When will they answer the broken cries?

The assassin has no skill
Needs no scope to target kill
Because the protectors silence
Has sanctioned their intent

Abomination
Assassination
Civilization
Extermination

Who gave you consent
To devalue their lives?
Scavenge your own

Although the fear hangs in the wind
While the predators nap

And replenish their cruel desires

These women now maintain the pack
And they will rise and growl
You have forfeited your rights

Journal for my sisters

8/4/83 I called you Sweet Bill.

12/14/83 I have been shaking for three days.
My back has 7 bruises on it and it hurts to wear a bra.
One arm has a silver dollar sized bruise. My chest has a blue spot.
My left knee is dark purple and it hurts to go up and down stairs.
That same thigh is swollen in all different colors.
My forehead has a goose egg on it.
My entire head is bumpy and it hurts to brush my hair.
The ring on my little finger is almost flat and that finger is purple.
The neighbors came in to our apartment and pulled me into theirs.

6/3/84 You bruised my face and I don' t trust you at all.

7/23/84 Our one year anniversary. I called you "The Best"

8/27/84 He rocked me around the house again. That is all folks, never again.

10/10/84 We watched the Burning Bed together and you cheered Farrah Fawcett when she killed her abuser.

11/1/84 Bill beat me up 10/28-LAST TIME EVER!!! Freedom Day Oct 29th

10/8/85 I am still so worried things will be the same as it was before and I will die for it.

11/11/85 I let him answer the phone for the first time since we got back together. It was my ex-husband calling. Then Billy tried to commit suicide after he heard me laughing on the phone.

12/2/85 My dreams have become increasingly violent and vivid.

12/22/85 Have you ever held death in the palms of your hands?

1/16/86 I came home to find Billy breaking into the lock on the front door of my apartment building.

2/24/86 They found probable cause at the hearing today. Sometimes I wish I could bring my innocence back.

4/29/86 The life I believe in will be severely shaken and tested.

7/30/86 Never hung my head so low, I lost in court today. I never felt so relieved, closing the worst chapter in my life.

5/5/2002 Blood in my hair reminds me of you. The last time I saw you I yelled from the middle of the train tracks that I would kill you if you came near me again. You laughed darkness into the daylight.

© **Sandy Strunk - Usa**

An evening by the Thames

I do not need to smack that grin off.
Your hands own your pants again,
slutting through the city,
reaching for my skin.
Hands working your crotch and
the river is cool and oiled.
You leer over the railing.
It is evening, and you are one
at the office, Italian suit
all oiled and sticking to skin.
You sniff my legs, imagine me nude
pointed, prickled, heel flat
sticking to your crotch
as if I glued it there myself.
Pricked, your pants pointed
in flesh thinking

my hips, my breasts, my skin
glued to bones have lured
your hands to bulge
and have made your flesh unpretty,
boned and bound. You are
stuck and grinning, and I am free
and pretty used to your kind,
slinking through the city--slut.

© Shanti Weiland - Usa

Corpse visage

A restless spirit needing more
A gaze upon thine countenance
A thy tears thy pale palette of eclectic storm-soaked colors
draping translucent skin with mottled hues
mixing creating this corpse visage returning your stare.....
with every bittersweet smile
stinging blows rain down like the apologies
ghostly in appearance
fading smoke
lingering stench
vile temptation
those hands
that bring such love.....
wander amongst thy gravestones
lost dreams
fragments of illumination
spirit broken
back bent to the task of raising thy man-child
for that is what belief is all about....
light thy candles anew
from behind clouded
blind eyes
let them gleam upon reality
beg of them to dye away mottled blotches
to polaroid for posterity who thine are
and what thine are truly worth
for only then shall thy be free of chains
free of abuse
free of his brand of love
to find clarity
to find sight
to see beyond this corpse visage.

© Sharon Proper - Usa

The machine

It all feeds you know.
What you are trying to use up in me,
It drives you farther from your purpose.
You bloody me trying to lighten yourself.
Strengthen yourself.
Only to fall deeper into the cogs that push me higher.

You take your fists,
Your knives,
Your words,
Dig them into me.
You drain into me all that you want,
Need,
To not feel incomplete.

Your control is mine,
Every time you look in my eyes.
Eyes on my body.
Body on your mind.
Mind in your hands.
You lose Ability.
You lose your Self.
And breaks it into me.

You want the rights of gods
To puppeteer me.
Her.
Us.
Anyone.
Everyone.
You have no divine rights.
I do not belong to you.
I will not.

I come through this.
Every time.
Conquer you and all that you have done to me.
You bring me closer to you own catharsis.

Each time you empty your frustration,
Take a little more freedom from me.
I gain more.
I am light.
I am heaven-touched and spinning a new life.

© Shilo Schweizer - Usa

Six poets converse

Six Poets Converse is a USA based group of poets who live in different cities and exchange their poetry on the internet in several ' Poetry Dialogues' .

© Alice Pero
Attention Deficit

“The kid’s impossible. He runs all around the room. There’s nothing we can do with him.”
--Teacher of 3rd grade student

In the mornings TV and toothpaste,
colorful cereal, red white and blue, FDA sugar and chemical mix
Cartoons before breakfast, Mommys' aspirin, Daddys' booze,
Actors whining on the soap opera after the news
Man abuse, woman abuse, carefully scripted,
edgy voices to fill spaces between Mommys' moods
Child immune to jitters on the tube, runs in circles, pretends he is not here
does what Daddy does, copies TV actors' sneer
Child has attention-deficit, it is true
No one notices while he fiddles with his shoes
Mom brought him to the doctor on teachers' advise
Ritalin will fix him, it is not easy, it will have to do
Doc smiles blandly and shows them the door after minutes of talk,
insurance will cover it, just fill the papers and walk
No one sees the drug will make him an addict
Whose attention deficit is this?
Now he is in the classroom, he must sit and stand
Pledge of Allegiance, words misunderstood he must chant on demand
What is 'indivisible'? No one bothers to explain
Should he be invisible? a republic? justice?
He is zoning out, no one sees him or cares,
he is already labeled ADD, so why expect him to understand?
There is one thing that is sure, he won't miss his medication
He needs pills to be here, to sit quiet and be still
He will get his prescription filled and refilled
He has got his whole life before him, does anyone know
what will happen when he's 10 or 11 or 42?
Does anyone ever stop and ask him what he really
wants to do?
Whose attention deficit is this?
No one is calling this child abused
It's 100 percent doctor approved.

© Mary Hazen-Stearns
My Father his Friend, Mr. Hardy

The birdhouse lies on its side
in young white snow
in Mr. Hardys' yard

The perch, broken off, protrudes
from a bulging drift - a dismembered finger
beckons little swallows

From my bedroom window
I detect dried twigs poking
from the dark hole - nest remnants

under a protective roof -
evidence of past habitation
I wonder why my father

let Mr. Hardy have it?
I remember handing dad the nails
my eyes squeezing shut

every time the hammer slammed
into the white pine, the way his fist
gripped the handle

round indentations appeared
on the smooth skin of the wood
like large thumb prints

My father did not seem to notice
I did not mention it
My father is dead

as well as Mr. Hardy
but the bird house survives
It hangs from a branch

over the fence
I see the nails have begun to pop
Dad should have used screws

© **Ryfkah**
Beyond Babi Yar

The blanched bones began to rise like leaves in an autumn wind
Some floated in space while others walked the ground
They danced before me to the sad song of memory
A sharp finger pointed to the dark abysmal pit filled with babies' shoes
golden rings and tattered rags next to fragile translucent skin
the skin already making shades to block out the light
I listened for their cries but only heard laughters'
crescendo under full moons' light
Is this the promised resurrection of the dead? And where is G-d?
The bones fell back quietly to their amaranthine bed
Tears like rain fell from the silver-studded sky
I saw a glow from a single match in the black hole below
I then knew the light had always been present
and I too laughed while whispering the familiar strains of Kaddish

© **Thomas Fortenberry**
Pulling a Thread

Luis lost everything:
his respect, his honor, his manhood.
Dignity died with loving attention
at his callous hands: a self-inflicted dearth
of reasoning as sure as suicide.

This is not an easy thing to accomplish.
But he was victorious:
He destroyed his life
and mangled many others.

I will not speak of the shame
that kept his wife hidden for years,
the tears of his children,
the bruises of the screaming night
that held them all breathless.

A home became a prison
and its warden its torturer.
This alone is enough
to make God weep--
but be warned, there are tears
of sadness and tears of anger.

Luis, do you know which bitter rain
is falling in your name?

No, the most pathetic aspect of Luis
is too well known in the whispers
of red-faced, black-eyed tyranny
echoing forever through the alleys
of our secret little houses
with their lamb-blooded doors.

Be careful upon which door you knock,
Luis. Lazy temptation makes us
break every taboo given time.
And time is all we have
when knocking out the portals of choice:
Even the blood of the lamb bites
the knuckles of the fist which raps
upon the hardwood splinters
of hatred and misunderstanding.
Knock too loud and the answer will arrive
behind you, an angel of fire
redeeming a message you forgot
in the angry streets while loving
families cower inside, beyond the portal
protected by prayers of understanding, solidarity
of will and action called compassion.

I want to speak of the worst
side of the fist: the irreparable harm
it does to a person, a family, a culture.
You see Luis did not beat an individual.
He outright trampled
a culture into the dust, and then spat on it.
His mucous: The venom of shame
in a mold-dry tomb of a mouth.

You would kiss your mother
with that maggot-infested grave, Luis?
"I do," it cackled at your wife
and that tongue flicked, serpent-like, at your children,
licking their eyes like grapes
while you dreamed of the wine
you could bottle if only you could trample
their heads and squeeze out the right vintage.

An old, sour vintage of pain
so foul it guts the innocent

can be passed down generation to generation
and yet still intoxicate the stupid
before spilling out again
to do its true damage.

Their once were saints and knights
crusading across Aragon
and waving their long-sword honor above
their stallion-reared pride for all the world to see,
as unbending as Castile steel.

There once were explorers
unafraid of themselves reaching
the edges of the world, willing
to sail right off the maps
into the wet sphere of the unknown
and not only bring it back,
but colonize it, settle it, and love it.

There once were monks
who crossed the ocean
and crossed the found children
to teach them of love and charity--
though, it must be admitted, some fell down
upon meeting the same eternal fist
Luis also discovered. Hatred
crawls into people like demonic possession.

But stories and histories repeat
themselves like their madmen heirs.
However, a little awareness or a good library
as comfortable as the home of heritage
can make an exorcism of loss.

There once were tongues
babbling across the world
which turned quietly to mouth
the new vowels of the Iberian main
and teach and preach and reach
the mind, the heart, the soul.
It was a universal language
for a universal people: heart.

A knight, a captain, a father
cowled or uncowed, it is irrelevant:
they all tried to better the ground
upon which they stood, plow

the arid soil fallow, beget
a better tomorrow, uplift
the next generation with praise,
the open hands of a kiss, hugging
the future to the bosom of the past.

Si, you see,
there is wisdom in yesterday
as only father and mother can teach.
Yet there is also retreat
from the light, ignorance
of the heart, lack
of compassion, hate
of self, loathing
of others which translates universally
into an unraveling of skeins
and a destruction of tapestries
it took eternal generations to weave.
There is one vast loom
with an infinity of weavers
weaving rainbows of people.

Just think of the consequences,
Luis, before you act. It takes only one hand
to pull a thread out of the world
and unravel us all.

© Gary Blankenship
Sarah Jane Passed Through

When Sarah Jane was three,
she saw a camel in a cloud and a horse in a rock;
and when she told her mother, Mommy said
“Don’t be silly. Rocks are rocks and clouds are clouds.”
(and thinking of Emily, went back to feeding Baby Alice.)

When Sarah Jane was five,
she went to kindergarten dressed in her sister Dora’s dress
which had been preworn by her sister Clara
and Bobby Mills pinched her and made her cry,
calling her white trash and saying she smelled.
(Only Sarah’s socks and underwear were new.)

When sarah jane was nine,
Bobby offered her a quarter

to go under the bleachers and lift her dress;
when she said no, he told Tommy she wanted a dollar;
and when she told her mommy,
her daddy belted her for leading the boys on
(and saying he was sorry, comforted her later that night.)

when sarah jane was fourteen,
bobby asked her to the homecoming dance;
but her mother said she was too young
and her sisters would not let her wear their old dresses.
instead bobby took Mary Ann Witherspoon
from over at the trailer park.
(while sarah jane sat on her bed
and wrote in her special book.)

when sarah jane was eighteen,
she married bobby mills
and they moved in with his stepmother,
next to Mary Anns' parents in the trailer park
(and her momma cried for her baby alice
and losing emily.

when sarah jane was nearly twenty
and expecting Little Donna's sister
they buried her in a cardboard casket
bobby smashed her head for asking him
why he was out all night with mary ann nelson
(and alices' mother buried the special book with her)

When Donna was three years old

© Marilyn Injeyan
Honeysuckle Noire

Brass chords toll, percussion rings
More than hurled words branded
and seared by the savage messiah -
her father dressed in olive drab

His watercolors exude spring
She breathes in creamy gardenias
Skirt brushes wisteria spills
rustles and sways along garden path

Against the rage of broken bottles

and whisky sours, she cowers in a corner
tethered down by fear. Violet blooms
in white flesh are carefully concealed

Fireworks burst from cups of blossoms
Lemon verbena scrambles toward sun
Intrigued how light affects colors
she rubs a petal across her cheek

His scenes are collected around the world. Painted
warmth glows inside cottage windows. His nature
masked behind pastel strokes, robust hues fed
by sweet peas and a daughter bent to his will

Ebb of beating wings and buzz
Squirrels scurry beneath a grape arbor
In melanite shadows across drowsy dusk
she knows a different serenity, listens
to hyacinth blue

© Six poets - Usa

Heroína sin nombre

Sólo sé que el silencio ha tejido
mi rostro de esfinge,
cuando siento la raza caminar por mi vientre
con el grito más grande que ha escuchado la Tierra.
Nada importa la sangre, ni el caudal ni la vida,
que perderse pudieran por salvar la inocencia
de ser madre y amante bajo el yugo del miedo.
Sólo sé que el silencio nos arrastra en la sombra,
nos condena y nos juzga,
como el pájaro herido por saltar de la jaula
o la corza del bosque que encontró la salida
de su muerte enredada
en los largos pasillos de su cruel carcelero.
Presa fue de los hombres
que engendraron los hijos en su rosa de trigo,
en su mar y su lecho de sabor marinero,
de perfume alazán en mitad de las olas.
Ah, qué dolor ese grito por salvarse en silencio,
por salir calle arriba bien cerrada la puerta
y buscarse en la noche porque estaba perdida,
traspasada de angustia bajo un puño de nieve.
Sí, sólo sé que el silencio
acompaña sus pasos de mujer en la sombra,
de heroína sin nombre con sandalias de estrellas.
Es tan firme su estela,
su perfil horizonte dibujando el futuro,
que ya nadie podrá sumergirla en olvido.
Enterrarla en el pan amasado en sus manos.

© Soledad Caverro - Spain

Battered

Words rain down upon a battered heart
too weak to take a stand
too tired to voice an opinion
and much too fragile to walk away.

She holds onto the dream of peace
like a chalice deliberating her future
coffee stains taking the place
of the warm hands she craves.

She holds onto her thoughts
with a thread of unspoken conviction
as his terror demands she listen
but she cannot hear him anymore
her ears are deaf for her protection
her heart is wrapped safely
behind a wall that even he cannot climb
Though he placed it there,
brick by brick.

© ***starshine*** - Usa

A good woman

A good woman does what he says.
A good woman does what he wants.
A good woman accepts all of his criticism.
A good woman does not talk back.
A good woman accepts his punches.
A good woman hides the bruises.
A good woman is a good victim.

Silenced victims coved in shame
dare not speak
devastate a family name.
instead bearing the burden than to bring porn to fame.
For who would believe
she must have liked it
they say.
I did not hear her scream.
Neither did I.
Her body bears no scars, it must be a lie.
Like empty raindrops that fall and evaporate
so is the judicial magistrate.
While he is out in eight
she embraces a life sentence of hate...

© Susan Stone Salas - Usa

The women

Out of the mist comes a hand
holding a hand holding a hand,
a long chain - mother, daughter,
the women march by, they are
one of the elements, ancient
as the earth and they call to her,
put the sacrificial knife
in her hand.

She is courageous and brave.
The knife is lifted high,
comes down with a sigh,
cuts off lips and clitoris,
an offering to the reigning Phallus.

Deaf and blind,
he condescends to
accept the sacrifice
as a matter of convenience,
unaware of the
abyss
gaping
growing

The feminine cycle

Each month with the rising of the full moon
my blood rises in high tide to meet
the perfect orange disc glowing dimly
above the purple shadow of the Golan Heights.
My veins overflow with wrenching, inscrutable
longing, offering the tears of my womb
as sacrifice to the Great Mother.
I bleed my heartaches to the earth
and as a token of her gratitude
she sends me fragrant blossoms to revive
my spirit, and fresh greenery to rebuild
my bones. Her stones use me
as a tuning fork, in an endless
search for the perfect note.

The time I created you

Warm and rustly was the time
I created you, daughter.
I was surrounded
by the complacent ones,
celebrating sea and sun, but
an arctic tone, woven into
the winds' hem has already
summoned the summation of summer.

Clear and caressed was the time
I created you, daughter.
I was surrounded
by the unexpected ones,
who have not been initiated
in the secret of new life
gushing forth in my womb.

© **Tammara Hayimi Slilat - Israel**

Picnic

It is all very strange
I just woke up and feel confused
Forest birdsong grass
those I recognize
This must be a picnic
yet where are the children?
I am sure they are fine
they are always fine
they must be.
I must have been sitting in a bad position
as I cannot feel my feet.
Sometimes you hurt me
why do you hurt me?
How nice!
My children
they are here too
sleeping in the grassy shade.
Did you put them there?
They are very quiet
never this quiet.
The sun is warm and you have a shovel.
Do you love me?

© Teemu Lahteenmaki - Finland

Monster

the door opens with a creak
silent footsteps cross the floor
her eyes shut tight with terror
HAIL MARY FULL OF GRACE...

the footsteps stop right by her bed
warm breath upon her ear.
the putrid smell of rotten teeth.
BLESSED ART THOU AMONG WOMEN...

she dares not make a sound
for fear that mama will be hurt
so silently she screams for help
HOLY MARY MOTHER OF GOD...

as he pulls her panties down
a deafening shot rings out
she sees mama at the door
PRAY FOR US SINNERS NOW...

as mama rushes to her side
she sees daddy lying on the floor
it never hurts to pray
AMEN.

Chasing Mirages

On my knees I crawl back to you
through the inferno of hell.
Promising anything and everything
just to gain your favor.
You lift me from the floor,
like a child you hold me.
Kissing the blood from my lips
you swear it will never happen again.
Believing in what you say,
life is perfect once more.

Snapping back to reality I realize
that chasing mirages is gonna get me killed.

© Terry Anthony - Usa

Eva

Zo ligt zij daar, haar handen in de schoot,
over haar zinloos moederschap te mokken:
haar ene, de zachtmoedige is dood,
en Kaïn, die het teken draagt, vertrokken.

Zonder gezicht is de haat tegen haar god
wiens plan als vonnis aan haar werd voltrokken
en zonder mond vervloekt zij fel het lot
dat baren degradeert tot domweg fokken
van leven dat straks toch ontbindt en rot.

Daar ligt ze dan, ooit was ze uitgerekend,
nu is ze uitgeteld aan één en twee.
Als voor de derde straks haar vliezen breken,
houdt ze nog steeds, tegen de zwaarste wee,
haar handen in de schoot gebald tot vuisten,
denkend aan toen de wolf sliep naast de ree
en god nog als God in de bomen ruiste

© **Theo van de Wetering - Netherlands**

Take this grief and weave it in song
Turn it to anger to upheave the wrongs
Undo this cycle, undo this pain
Pray for these families again and again!

Pray til their hearts can rise out of the flames
Pray til the world knows all their daughters' names
Sing out in prayer, pray out in song
Enough is enough: it is murder, it' s WRONG.

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Cotidianas de mi ciudad

Sola, inocente .. la noche

Miedo, frío .. llanto

Gritos, golpes .. sangre

Mujer, verdugos .. infamia

Inquietud, desconcierto, presentimientos, búsqueda,

Pesquisas, retratos, esperanza, tristeza .. realidad

Restos, funerales, familia, soledad, impotencia, coraje ..IMPUNIDAD

© **Valta Ortega - Mexico**

El murmullo de la guerra

I.

En la inquietante noche
ni los pájaros duermen,
astros y constelaciones giran
cargando en murmullo de la guerra
traen en su centro los aullidos
de tantos niños
que nos habitan el alma.

II.

Su piel bebe el transcurrir de los días,
su pié atraviesa pantanos de muerte.
Al caer el día, luces revientan la ciudad,
escombros tapan una y otra vez a sus habitantes.
Más allá de las fronteras, pueblos enteros
desgarran sus voces pidiendo auxilio.
El mundo espera la respuesta
mientras del otro lado del muro
un niño juega con el internet.

El río murmura el dolor de Maria

La ciudad amanece vestida de estragos
bebiendo mentiras.
El sol se apagó en marzo
y cayó en el orificio de la noche
que cubría las casas de todas las mujeres.
Las lágrimas de la luna tocaron a esta tierra
y la convirtieron en un mar de espanto.
La luna ya no canta en Ciudad Juárez
ayer se vistió de negro amargo
el río murmura el dolor de María
mientras el desierto en dos se parte.
Los dioses inundan el río
que se convierte en un pozo cargado de cadáveres.

© **Veronica Leiton - Chile-Mexico**

Si tan sólo escucharas ...

(Octubre 25 del 2002)

Si tan sólo escucharas un instante
y volvieras la mirada a este hogar desolado,
sabrías cuánta miseria ronda por doquier
y cuán hondo es el abismal silencio con el que se yergue
un monumento a la injusticia.

Si tan sólo escucharas un instante,
llegaría hasta ti el gemir de tantas madres
que no hacen más que morir cada día
ante la angustiante espera que taladra los huesos,
y el no saber dónde reposará su cabeza
la pequeña que hace tiempo, no duerme en casa...

Si tan sólo escucharas un instante,
alzarías la voz, unida a la de otras tantas
que hacen de su garganta un estandarte
cuyo emblema se alza en fiera lucha,
reclamando cada día un poco de paz.

Si tan solo escucharas un instante,
percibirías en el murmullo de la noche
las voces de tantos que han sido amordazadas
con el silencio de una fosa común.

Sabrías que cada nuevo día es un desgarrador grito
de esta tierra cuyo suelo teñido en púrpura
se rehusa a guardar en su seno,
la sangre inocente de uno más de sus hijos,
vencido brutalmente ante el brazo asesino
de sus propios hermanos.

Si tan sólo escucharas un instante,
saltarías de tu asiento acojinado
y dejarías el mullido lecho donde duermes.

Proclamarías a los cuatro vientos tu repudio
a la mezquindad que compra y vende vidas ajenas,
y te levantarías erguido sobre las anónimas tumbas
que se esconden tras los cimientos de edificios blanqueados
con paredes de mármol y ventanales de cristal,
donde se archivan sueños y se regatean esperanzas.

Si tan sólo escucharas un instante,
descubrirías que entonces

y quizá sólo entonces,
podrías detener la violencia
por un momento...

Llueve en la ciudad
(Octubre 20 2002)

Llueve en la ciudad
Y el agua que corre en torrentes,
de rojo púrpura, teñida está.

Llueve en la Ciudad
Y a la niña arrastran con furia
dos brazos movidos por la lujuria
en el vendaval.

Llueve en la Ciudad
Y la madre abraza ausente una fotografía
Que entre arrullos duerme junto a la muñeca fría
de la pequeña que no vendrá.

Llueve en la ciudad
Y muchos padres ya no encuentran
el camino de regreso al hogar.
Su frágil cuerpo tendido queda
albergando a media noche, en el riñón un puñal.

Llueve en la ciudad
Alacranes venenosos vigilan en la oscuridad,
Y acechantes manos esperan en cada esquina
Cobrando como precio la vida
en desigual lucha que la cobardía da.

Llueve...mas no es rocío,
Sino lágrimas y sangre
Lo que empapa a la ciudad.

Mi Ciudad Ha Sido Herida
A Cd. Juárez, sol enlutado que no deja de brillar.
(Agosto 31 de 2003)

Mi ciudad agoniza herida de muerte,
su calcañal ha sido destrozado.
¡Cómo lamento tu suerte, ciudad mía!
Tu prosperidad ha sido puesta a la venta
ofertándose al mejor postor.

Tus plazas y calles lucen devastadas
mientras que en ellas se pasean
cubiertos con sus mejores ropas
los impostores que le sirven a la injusticia,
a la avaricia y al deshonor.

Te has vestido de luto a pesar tuyo
y has sido perseguida y ultrajada
por abominables manos que ahora pretenden
pasar por el purificador ritual de tu perdón.

¡Levántate!
¡no derrames más lágrimas inmerecidas!
alza tu brazo y escribe en el horizonte tu nueva ley
y que tu grito se levante con toda su fuerza
y con todo su poder
para que sepan todos que aún estás viva
decidida a pelear con fiereza
y recuperar lo que te ha sido arrebatado.

¡Levántate y pelea!
el sol apenas despierta
y a ti te espera una triunfal batalla.

Niña Que Te Has Marchado

Sin Tiempo De Decir Adiós
A todas las niñas que aún espera Cd. Juárez.
(Agosto 30 de 2003)

Niña de piel de seda
y sonrisa de ensueño.
¡Dale cuerda a tu reloj!
y quita el moho de sus manecillas
para que vuelva a marcar de nuevo las horas
y los minutos
y los segundos.

Niña de andar prodigioso
y mirada de ángel.
Desde que te marchaste
los días han huido despavoridos,
llevándose con ellos la última de tus huellas
pues temen que ella se borre
si los alcanza el mañana:
Por eso nadie tiene un mañana.

El engranaje de los relojes se ha oxidado
y las horas se extinguen como espectros
rehusándose a morir, sin saber que
desde que no estás, han muerto ya.

Los hombres han caído en un aletargado sueño,
sólo unos cuantos se mantienen despiertos
mientras que otros se han convertido en nahuales:
Atacan al anochecer transformados en animales
-que es su verdadera esencia-
y enseguida desaparecen disfrazados de hombres
dejando una estela de muerte
como evidencia de su stirpe y de su historia.

Los niños aún sonríen
mostrando su rostro amarillento y lúgubre
mientras deambulan por las plazas
como fantasmas errantes
cargando un costal de respuestas.

Van hilando canciones
cual pregonero que trata de vender sueños
y regatear esperanzas.
y a todos dicen que el día está cerca
en que los relojes marcarán de nuevo el tiempo
devolviendo el mañana que nos ha sido robado.
Y abierta está la puerta
por donde han de entrar los que ya retornan a casa,
para unirse al glorioso encuentro.

Niña de andar prodigioso,
piel de seda,
mirada de ángel
y sonrisa de ensueño:
Dale cuerda a tu reloj
-que es el nuestro-
y entra por esa puerta.
Tu casa y tu ciudad
te esperan.

© Veronica Olivas - México

I love you

crooked nose which meets your fist
fierce palm to cheek, a cry suppressed,
my complaint i do repress -
how can i speak?
my tongue tied in a knot of fear
the smell of sweat, cigars and beer
i dream i am any place but here
another life...
but why should ever i complain?
i have a roof to stop the rain
and never have i hunger pangs
to make me weak
the only thing i have to do
is cook and clean and care for you,
just like i always wanted to -
a perfect wife
and just be careful what i say
and not to stumble in your way
or drop the china dinner tray
or breathe too loud
and not to speak or sound too brave
or mention when you didn't not shave
or when you told me to behave
with two black eyes;
i sat that night and wondered when
your violent reign would ever end
and, for a moment, if all men
were so allowed
if modern slave and wife were one
or if the bind could be undone
or, if I could, I would ever run,
your love despise
i almost then decided to,
to run, to shout "so long!" to you,
to let the bruises, black and blue,
fade eternally
but, a thought came creeping in -
this battle i will never win
you will only have me back again;
you always do
so...here i sit, and here i stay,
day and night, night and day,
rehearsing words i will never say:
"today i am leaving"
and now i lay inside a box

under dirt and grass and rocks
and the stone above me quietly mocks
"I loved you"

© **Windy Sue - Usa**

Las promesas

(Scroll down for the English version)

En este día blanco en la presencia del doy mis promesas a ti.
Te prometo quererte durante cualquier tribulación.
Si tu me quieres. No te obsesese de mi.
Te prometo ser tu mejor amiga. Si tu sera mi compañero de vida.
No te alejes de mi
To prometo ser madre de tus hijos. Si tu sera padre
No los abandones.
Te prometo no llorar. Si tu no me culpeas.
No me hagas daño
Te prometo no reglamar. Si tu me respecta
No me humilles.
Te prometo tus cenas listas cada día. Si tu tienes paciencia.
No me grites.
Te prometo darte plaser. Si tu me das amor.
No te esfuerze en mi.
Te prometo darte mi vida. Si tu no me la quitas.
Dejame vivir.
Con estas promesas mi amor me entrego a ti.

The promises

On this white day under our Lords' presence I give you my promises.
I promise to love you through all tribulations. If you love me too.
Do not obsess over me
I promise to be your best friend if you are mine. Don not turn away from me
I promise to be the mother of your children If you are the father.
Do not abandon them
I promise not to cry If you don not beat me.
Please do no hurt me.
I promise not to complain. If you respect me.
Please do not humiliate me.
I promise dinner ready by eight. If you have patience.
Please do not scream at me.
I promise you pleasure in our bed. If you give me love.
Please do not force yourself upon me.
I promise to give you my life. If you do not take it away.
Please let me live.
With these promises my love I give myself to you.

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Afterword

You may have noticed that often Cd. Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico, is mentioned. Fact is that crimes against women in that city, where I lived from July 1999 till July 2003, fortunately has caught international attention but still is a big problem. However, through organizing 'FacingFaces' I learned that indeed one victim is as much worth our attention as hundreds or even thousands of victims of domestic violence. Or, as a Jewish saying goes, ' when one saves one life, one saves humanity' . Fact is, indeed hundreds of thousands of women globally are victim of domestic and/or sexually related violence. No matter nationality, culture or race, poor or rich. Women too often are just being violated because of being a woman. I can only hope this E-book, this voice, can be of help to stop the violence.

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