

IMAGE

POEM



1 *Let's get drunk, I say / and forget every day on this land / we're being hunted like rabid dogs...*



2 *This time, you won't buck me, / I'll hold on to the reins, / I'll hold onto you tightly, / and I won't lose my foothold.*



3 *Rails are no road, much like timber crossties are no sleepers: / they're a long, endless marimba beating from south to north, from the green dying beneath the sun, to the blue biting into heaven.*



4 *You go by a soulless country / and I too go by the name country / and you reading may go too by the name country / like the living / who show up in the missing bodies / in the corpse / of a vanishing country.*



5 *I lost my voice to the abyss / it must be blowing the whistle: / the map of Mexico is killing us*



6 *My mom got real sick / I didn't even say goodbye / My wife left for who knows where / She thinks The Beast is me.*



7 *And the branch of a tree, or another's arm / or the wind of June, knocked him off / He hit the ground like a wounded bird / and someone's shoe was left behind*



8 *A house / a tree / a dog, / the tracks / the train / you*



9 *Tight-rope sleepers / red-hot faces caught red-handed, / offering / blood, sweat, and remains.*



10 *I've seen them leave their towns in despair / running away from their luck / no longer afraid*



11 *Whenever you grow tired of being an Indian, / go north / where they kill Indians.*



12 *Let there not be, let there not be, let there not be / empty shoes mid-air / hacked arms / railroads breaking people / nor dividing lines nor hate words / nor ash, nor bloodshed, nor oblivion.*



13 *Many moons have rolled by / since I pulled my feet from southern lands / The train never sped up its iron pace / but left behind time to recall*



14 *"From Guatemala to Nicaragua, From Honduras, Mexico, or El Salvador, The Beast tows and hauls / run of the mill cannon fodder are some / run of the mill cannon fodder some sum,*



15 *Worried mothers / pray / for their children / to keep / all their beauty marks.*



16 *on a centipede beast / a hundred poisons to swallow / a hundred bullets to bite / a hundred conceits to cross*



17 *Sleepers nurse each other / by their ill-fate / the fallen asleep shower the buds / and blossom like poppies amid the tracks.*



18 *I've been forever shattered: / seeking shelter, watering no hope / On the death train I long breaking with emptiness, / even before climbing on I know I'm lost / cancelled out for life, kidnapped and soulless.*



19 *Arriving in Mapastepec, they ran to the freighter. Only Crystal and Marcela managed to climb up. The twins and Eufasio would never see their bodies again. Worn out, on a curve, they fell off.*



20 *electric pole with a hanging bag of rice. helping hand. uplifting hand. soft hand. walnut shell. plum seed. dark swan crawling.*



21 *With death ahead / the only poetry left / is life itself.*



22 *The innocent walk a freight of poverty on their back, / lonesome in the tracks of life, / a thousand tremors climb on the back of the beast.*



23 *Poverty is a cross that dresses the landscape / hunger, a line of footprints on the sand.*



24 *Many moons have rolled by / since I pulled my feet from southern lands / The train never sped up its iron pace / but left behind time to recall.*

*Translated by Yaocí Pardo*

IMAGE

POEM



25 *The innocent walk, a freight of poverty on their back / lonesome in the tracks of life / a thousand tremors climb on the back of the beast.*



26 *When the beast nests in hope / hunger claws the body with the nails / and tugs the north of the soul up to the heart / where life rides the back of the migrant.*



27 *On the altar of dreams there are no borders, / Yuumsiles of death drink copal / while dancing songs to life.*



28



29 *They said: / don't fall asleep / but no one said: / don't dream*



30 *The Beast is dead already / No one can ride it no more / It is a ghost / With a hundred skulls above.*



31 *That, I'll say, in the morning / When my child wakes up / That a flood of fondness / isn't enough if you love.*



32 *THE SISTER of the departed sister is left / earless, eyeless, speechless, reasonless, meaning / less. Lonely, very lonely.*



33 *Pushing on against a parched red wind, crossing the continent slower than a monarch / butterfly though the image escapes the mind.*



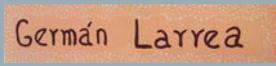
34 *risk of theft and bullets / risk of death, fear, fear... many ride up, thousands ride up.*



35 *Some charities (Las Patronas) relieve desolation; / only the shadow of hope is left / deep in their eyes.*



36 *I've seen them leave their towns in despair / running away from their luck / no longer afraid.*



37 *That-which-doesn't-carry-us-passes-us-by. It hurries along. Cemetery-without-crosses. Lights. It-is-the-wind-that-knocks-down. It knocks down. Knocked down. It dances.*



38 *Sofia lost awareness, lost her breath, / lost a leg.*



39 *On a centipede beast / a hundred poisons to swallow / a hundred bullets to bit / a hundred conceits to cross.*



40 *And now, that I turn / my headless body, / I see people / all around buy their heads in the sand*



41 *And in the blink of an eye the departed shall take wing, and the legion of migrants shall rise above the sound and the fury.*



42 *Mamá stood, medal in hand, it's Saint Anthony, she said / so you'll come back soon / but I haven't left yet / you'll never leave even if you leave.*



43 *risk of theft and bullets / risk of death, fear, fear... many ride up, thousands ride up*

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44 *for you I'll cross the desert with its sun sores / the border patrol with its bullet threats / and the yellow rock river*

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45 *Poverty is a cross that dresses the landscape / hunger, a line of footprints on the sand*

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46 *A house / a tree / a dog, / the tracks / the train / you*

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47 *On the altar of dreams there are no borders, / Yuumsiles of death drink copal / while dancing songs to life*

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48 *Now you've crossed, you've found yourself / You've got swagger*

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