



FACE HANGING LIKE A STAR **ITZOLIN VALDEMAR GARCÍA**

Excerpts from novella
Written at age sixteen

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In Mexico, there are dark places in the midst of the squalor and the pollution where there is no noise, little motion, where one can sit undisturbed. I live in the little village several miles from here. *Here* is El Toro, a bar or café. What could you call it?

The men sitting at the table nearby take no notice of me. They are a world unto themselves. They talk and smoke and drink. Three faces. There is a little light shining down from a bulb on the ceiling. The heat is sweltering. The mosquitoes are sweating. “What do you say, what do you say? What’s happening. It’s all sure to collapse. We’re not safe here, you know. Three years and they’ll pull their switch or whatever it is, we’ll all be shadows, incinerated, I’m telling you—”

“Shut up. You think in terms of myths. I want to shatter myths. I’ll shatter you if you’re not careful—”

“What do you say about my new painting? I swear, I’m becoming fanatical. What do you call it—paranoid. The painting is a zoo. Schizophrenic—”

They talk, interrupting one another, never letting each other finish. Each one feeds off the unfinished thought of the one before him. They are ceaseless.

“My nightmare was good. The lady, she came to me. Her lips were like crabs, they were feeling. She sat nearby, her feet—they started to shoot up in the air. I put down the newspaper and tried to feel her, touch her—her lips, they pinched me, pincers, cutting my mouth—”

“What about the smoke? They say when you smoke a cigarette, you should watch the smoke, the way it rolls, and you’ll figure it all out, just like that. I say—”

“Your painting was childish, mysterious. The whole thing was turning and melting. Like a memory—you can hold it in your mind, but it turns and melts, eludes you. You should try landsc—”

A woman opens the door and walks in—the momentary flash of light leaves an impression on the eyes. I lean my head back and try to study the image as long as I can—like a Kirlian photograph, but fading. The impression of a woman in a doorway is archetypal, primal—looking at it there, burned in my vision momentarily, it seems deeply intimate, one of the first images to impress itself into the human mind—mother, perhaps—

In Mexico, it is possible to paint alone. The critics and theorizers abound in the city, but the country is left alone. . . . It rains much here. The sky is always gravid, heavy, looks like a huge stone hovering over the world. I go into El Toro seldom—when I want to live a waking dream. The rain is good. It gives one the feeling of peace—even during a storm. During the storms, the flowers stand out vividly with unnatural colors. The boys run with their bicycles. The boxes of fruit are left outside of houses. Trees reach higher with their branches to receive the rain. Somewhere next door I can hear ardent lovers embracing, moaning. Such a peace. The world could be shattered in a cataclysm and the lovers would go on making love. Perhaps the girl will conceive today. After each storm, we emerge from our houses, just born—the storm is a kind of universal conceiving, then a gestation, then an emerging—everyone comes out of the houses to look at the world. Mouths are agape, bodies are relaxed. The world is new, flourishing . . .

I paint in here, producing strange, convoluted children. It is so much like a waltz with death—the somber music, the drapery black and enveloping everything. I try to sleep but spend the nights dreaming, and in the morning I remember each dream individually, precisely. I recount each one on the canvas, laboring, sweating. The paintings are black and constructed and sucking, each one like a mass of severed blood vessels clutched in one hand. I am weeping, giving birth, I am dying, I am inseminating.

Reach deeper into the soil of memory—each painting is a billion memories melded only partially, flimsily—each one an image ready to disjoint. I struggle up there, at my summit, at the height of ecstatic painting, hurling myself over into the uncharted, finding the work too vague and indistinct—cursing, pacing—back to the work, wrestling with it like I would a beast, gripping hair, horns, *down*, tame the thing. —It throws me forward, where I tumble blindly and feel something like a loosening of tensed muscles—like a child fallen in the street, his coins jarred from his hand—the result of the coin of the soul splotted thickly. I pant, I relax—the struggle does not remit—it pauses briefly.

The life by the stream is rich and fascinating—I have given up plumbing the soul's depths for sitting by the stream. To watch. To draw. The grasses and the stones and the trees are cold and moist with dew at dawn. The sun rises slowly and smears their edges with light. One has the illusion at first that all is still. You have only to look closely at the ground to see the swarming life . . .

I usually come here at dawn with paper and pencils and shiver in the early morning cold. I warm with the world in the sunlight. Later on the children come. We are the only ones who enjoy this place. The children—jubilant, like grasshoppers leaping. They come and splash in the water, forgetting themselves, hurling mud at one another. They lift up insects and scrutinize them, kiss the earth, pick flowers and scatter their petals irreverently . . . I try to draw the flowers and the children's faces. The kids move too quickly. Their teeth are startlingly white—I try to capture this by shading the entire paper with graphite and then erasing, trying to educe teeth from the shadows. The result a blob of smeared gray. I show this to them and they laugh. One boy wants to draw. I happily lend him my tools. He sets to work assiduously, his hair falling over his eyes, he pushing it away now and then with curses. Later he finishes, proudly shows it to me. I laud it, genuinely impressed. I tell him he reminds me of Diego Rivera. He does not know who that man is. The children think that I am strange. They leave me and play . . .

Moved into a room—second storey—in another town. This town is larger, not as bucolic. Cars pass through. The walls of the house are white, cracked. Downstairs is a family—father, mother and several children. The woman labors all day, tending to her

flock, changing diapers, cooking fiercely. Today it is pork. My belly rumbles. She is such a good wife. Devout. Her husband works all day driving a truck. At night I see him drive up and honk at his children, bellowing orders. Life does not treat them well. The father beats no one—he simply yells. At night, he does not take her by force, but I hear her whimpering fearfully. I am painting again, recalling the image of the woman in the doorway. The whimpers of the woman downstairs give me direction—both women, the one in the doorway and the one downstairs—are faceless, yet they exude pain, an electricity, an inexorable maternal endurance. I try to draw the two women as one, and try to surround them pictorially with the aura that they emit in life. The painting fails.

It is Easter and I am in Mexico City. Manic. Enormous city. Whores and men and children, mothers, musicians, traders, cooks, dancers, prayers—for a minute, I am losing control, unable to register in my mind the presence of so many people, so many shifting bodies, the activity. People do not think here. They move. A beehive. Order in chaos. Terrified, ecstatic, I move, realizing that to stop could be to go under the waves, to be devoured by the crowds.

A huge stone square—a cathedral at its far end. Here there is space to move. The vendors sell fluorescent toys to people, who spin and hurl them. The plaza glitters with fluorescent eyes. The packs of people like thick blots of ink. Huge roaring night gleaming with lights and faces and legs—hurtling Easter eggs. Can hear drums somewhere—deep, not like contemporary drums. Deep Aztec drums not far away, making the ground faintly tremble. People are approaching. I follow.

In Mexico City there are groups of dancers that struggle to preserve the old rituals of dancing for the purposes of symbolic sacrifice. Such groups teem in Mexico City—at Easter time they take over this plaza and others like it. The people love them—many of them ignorant of the dancers' cause—watching with stone-still wonder as they congregate outside of the cathedral, form circles, begin their dancing . . .

They come from all parts of Mexico, many from outside it, each of them led by a chief—some of them more popular, more well-reputed than the others, therefore more respected within the circle of dancers as a whole. They began coming into the plaza in the

morning, but the dancing begins at sunset. They are young men and old men and lost men, all of them caped and costumed, beautiful, wearing plumed headdresses with ostrich feathers and *quetzal* feathers—pheasant, eagle, peacock, their costumes adorned with embroidered thread, inlaid stones—standing gorgeous in their groups, each armed with a rattle, some of them wielding shields.

It is completely dark now—that is, the sun has completely sunk—although there is a multitude of lights surrounding the plaza, the dancers light their circle with a flame burning in an earthen pot. The drums pound. They flail their limbs the way the fire flickers in the pot. Their headdresses are turned from side to side—the feathers tremble. They sweat. A withered old woman runs about within the circle. She burns *copal* within the fire. The sweet *copal* burns, the faces of the dancers lit by the fire, the night surrounding them glittering multitudinously—they dance, they sacrifice their flesh and blood wholly—the drums pound—the people watch—

Though they pause after each dance, they don't end . . .

At midnight I am still watching. The crowd stirs. A new band of *danzantes* passes through, entering the circle—they are welcomed. The circle begins anew, this time with a preliminary ceremonial dance—*la cruz*, they call it, honoring Catholicism. Then the arduous, frenetic dancing—many of the dancers, old men, gasp as they dance, watery eyes lowered to the ground, legs rising and falling. The young men dance victoriously—they are battling, chests bare, rattles shaking . . .

Later, when the mesmeric whirling of the dancers has entranced us, the audience—when our minds reel in vertigo—the stars spin in the sky—the old woman, *la curandera*, goes to one young man, smears his body with unguent and oils—he goes to the fire-filled urn, slowly lowers his chest to the flames, pauses, then gracefully rises, unfazed. The older men perform a mock sacrifice, leaping over the fire-dancer's recumbent body—they clutch fragments of obsidian—

They leap in the sun dance, Quetzalcoatl's dance, Huizilopochtli's—then the somber haunting dance of death—one man dressed as Meclantehcutli, weaving across the

empty circle, his sinuous powerful jerking from side to side, wearing a skull over his face, ancient—

Mexico is in a frightful Easter tumult. Even in death, even when Meclantehcutli dances, the people rejoice and fling their Easter eggs. . . . The morning finds me still walking, shivering in the cold of dawn—the sun rises in lurid flames. The city has not yet awakened. The *danzantes* lie in sleeping bags in the plaza. I watch them.



PHOENIX HOTEL
ITZOLIN VALDEMAR GARCÍA

Last manuscript
Age twenty-seven

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Codex Itzolin

Book of red eyes
Of black hands

Zacateco eyes hold the corn they tear away the leaves
inside is a baby his skin is red his tongue is a gold moth

The young Xicanito always wants to walk without clothes his body hurts him one day he begins to scratch at it and he finds green and blue feathers beneath his skin scared, thirsty, wanting to touch the sky, he strips off his outer layer he lifts the trees of his arms his friends help him to move he no longer has a sex he has memories his feathers are made of old voices the colors bend from his arms and touch the world

Mira nomás see that bird his eyes always looking at you his turquoise blood

What do you see behind closed eyes? the white sky crossed by the jaguar of ink? the woman whose hands make a bowl filled with red circles? the mountain that pushes until it makes light into stone?

You, have you always known you are a jaguar? a jaguar made of the night

Paint what you see
all the hands all the eyes



JÁRCOR {conga^ira^versiónSOL}

Hubo un conguero del barrio de Oxenqui le llamaron Tres porque tocaba como si tuviera tres manos en vez de dos tocaba el timbal el bongo las congas > a veces sonaban como un agua de pestañas a veces golpeaban el bosque como papagayos astillando el sol aún cuando hablaba su voz se derramaba con nubes y susurros pellejo de cocodrilo descanso y lluvia conchas frotadas entre un abrazo

oscuro

estampidos de amor

madera desafinada

BAN ban bTA-GA-GAN

Tres llegó a la gran ciudad desde la isla ne'sitaba plata pensaba que con las congas le trajeran \$ al empezar le iba bien sonreía cuando tocaba traía nervios sus manos eran como niños de madera como cuatro o cinco papagayos de la isla palmeando alas relámpagos bamboo tartamudeos rRRRápidos le encantaba descargarse y pensó que a la gente también le gustaría tocaba desde lo hondo de sus brazos marchas y plenas golpes suaves tartamudeos bajos a veces cuando pasaba una persona buena le hacía otro sonido el sonido de un santo respirando un pez bebiendo hojas de sol la caña de azúcar sudando ranas azules trabajaba debajo del farolito las sombras mojadas se movían alrededor de él y hacían rezos yorubas se quitaba la camisa y sus ojos se arrugaban con devoción su garganta hinchada sus dientes fuertes abriéndose

pero después de días y días Tres estaba cansado pa'l carajo no había dinero no había plata el sol se estaba ensuciando se había perdido la camisa hacía demasiado que no comía nadie le escuchaba las congas

nadie pero nadie nadie cuando alguien le miraba a los ojos era como pa' decir +vago+ +basura+ +hijueputa+ pobre Tres se estaba enojando sabía que algo estaba mal sabía que se merecía vivir

pues pa'ese momento lo vieron unos muchachos del barrio pero no era bueno Tres no quería que lo vieran tenían los ojos cabrones hablaban mal como perros golpeados como los gallos que pelean en el reñidero como hombres de la prisión algo tenía que pasar pero Tres tenía un corazón que tamboreaba lumbre no tenía nada de miedo quería la vida tan siquiera si estaba cabrona

pues por fin se tiraron pa' Tres y lo empezaron a amenazar se burlaron de sus congas le llamaron un jíbaro viejo y le dijeron que se caminara pa' su casa le llamaron agüelita y le dijeron que le iban a meter un puño y ningún espíritu lo iba a salvar no le dió miedo a Tres él dijo que algún día aprenderían jei algún día aprenderían no le importó ENTONCES UNO DE ELLOS COGIÓ UNO DE SUS TAMBORES Y LO EMPEZÓ A ROMPER 'MANO LO EMPEZÓ A ROMPER AHÍ EN LA CALLE LO HIZO PEDAZOS POLVO Tres se volvió loco cogió otro de sus tambores y lo estrelló en la calle ¿ASÍ? gritó ¡JEI! ¿ASÍ? los muchachos se echaron a reír y empezaron a romper todos los tambores cada cual estaba rompiendo cosas hubo VIOLENCIA pero entonces algo se rompió dentro de cada uno de ellos, los muchachos, dentro de Tres algo abrió el cielo y se cayó como una guerra negra de lágrimas como una tribu de relámpagos como un viento sagrado como un lamento de frutas cazadas algo pasó por todos ellos todos se enloquecieron sus ojos

rodaron pa'trás en sus cabezas animales enmascarados les llenaron la piel las cabezas
los brazos sintieron AMOR ENOJADO

SOL POTENCIAS

toda la calle chorreaba gritos Tres y los muchachos siguieron rompiendo los
tambores pero fue un ritmo fue una canción vieja que ni siquiera sabían tocar nomás le
tiraron le dieron sus cuerpos enteros al baile porque lo sintieron lo sintieron
tocaron járcor así se descargaron por horas o quizás días su ira se creció
pero también la CANCIÓN también la BENDICIÓN conga sintieron una madera que
se quemaba en el fondo de sus cuerpos sintieron una espiral de agua

una candela de sombra soltando espinas ojos dorados

Sintieron ecos en troncos de árbol cien pies de alto sintieron conchas lisas que giraban y
giraban dentro de la luna sintieron dientes y pellejo de elefante sobre sus frentes
sintieron olas calientes que bebieron su ira y los arrojaron lejos sobre unas rocas que
los chuparon hacia atrás que los echaron otra vez pa' lo hondo del cielo lejos pa' la
calle los olores a arroz y plátanos los sonidos de auto los negocios de la calle
los muchachos se despertaron de su baile se despertaron y se sintieron débiles
ya no estaban enojados ya no estaban enojados para nada tenían sed y querían
volver a sus mamis

le miraron a TRES estaba cubierto de la noche de la humedad de aliento de
espíritu el farolito hacía una corona de rostros sobre su pecho su latido bravo
su respirar fuerte TRES no se paró NO NO todavía estaba tocando
ya no tenía congas pero no le importaba

nomas batió sus palmas las superficies negras un grito fuerte contra otro
sus manos se hicieron dos orishas de madera tocó más y más fuerte
lloró con todo su corazón VIENTO TIRANDO FUEGO
sus manos eran sus congas sus manos eran sus congas

HARDCORE {conga^anger^SUNversion}

Itzolin's English interpretation

There was a conguero from the barrio of Oxenqui they called him Tres because he could
play as if he had three hands instead of two he played bongo kettledrum congas
sometimes the drums cried like a water of eyelashes
sometimes they pounded the forest like parrots splintering the sun

even when he spoke, his voice poured with clouds and whispers crocodile skin
sleep and rain shells rubbed through a dark embrace
booms of love untuned wood

BAN ban bTA-GA-GAN 

Tres came to the big city from the island he needed hard cash he thought he could play his congas for money at first it was good he smiled when he played he was nervous his hands were like wooden children like four or five island parrots clapping feathers bamboo lightning he let loose wherever the congas took him he played from deep in his arms rRRRRapid stuTTers sometimes when a nice person walked by he would do a different sound the sound of a saint breathing a fish drinking leaves of sun sugarcane sweating blue frogs he worked underneath the little streetlamp <he leafed and streetlamped the music> the wet shadows moved around him and did yoruba prayers he took off his shirt and his eyes wrinkled in devotion but after days and days and days Tres was damn tired there was no money the sun was getting dirty his shirt was lost he hadn't eaten his eyes were red no one listened to his congas no one no one when someone looked into his eyes it was like +dirty punk+ +bum+ +hustler+ Tres was becoming angry something was wrong he knew he deserved to live some young boys from the barrio noticed him but Tres didn't want to be noticed by them they had mean eyes they talked dirty like beaten dogs like roosters that fight in the pit like prison men but Tres had a heart that pumped fire he wasn't afraid he wanted life even if it WAS mean so they finally came over to Tres and they started to mess with him they made fun of his congas they called him an old bum they told him to go home they called him grandma and they said they were going to hurt him and no spirit was going to save him Tres wasn't afraid he said they would learn one day, yeah, one day they would learn he didn't care THEN ONE OF THEM TOOK ONE OF HIS DRUMS AND STARTED TO BREAK IT BREAK IT ON THE SIDEWALK INTO PIECES INTO DUST

something happened to Tres ***ANGER*** his beat changed he cackled it staggerSLAP smashing light between the seeds of maracas a roar swallowing rocks foam between clacking trunks splashing candles inside of Tres he was rattling />rapping wood and

shadow { **savage TIDEfast** }

with such hollow SPIRAL growls that they that something opened up the sky and fell down like a black war of tears like a band of taino victories a passage of light

something passed through all of them their palms groaned their eyes rolled back into
their heads masked animals filled their skin their heads their arms
they felt ANGRY LOVE SUN POWERS the moon skidding
the howl volumed through a thousand turning shells

Tres and the boys jammed HARDCORE they gave their whole bodies to the dance
because they felt it they felt it the clouds were with them they played hardcore
they jammed like this for hours or maybe it was days their wildness grew but so did the
SONG so did the congaBLESSING they felt wood burning deep inside of their bodies
trembling they threw themselves into their skyHALF they couldn't stop they felt a
spiral of water a candle of shadow giving off spines golden eyes they felt echoes in
tree trunks 100 feet high they felt smooth shells turning and turning inside the moon
they felt tusks and elephant skin across their foreheads

they felt hot waves drinking
their anger and
throwing them far against rocks
they were
sucked back
they were thrown again deep
into the sky far into the street
into the city
the smells of rice and bananas
speedHANDS

the boys woke up from their dance
they woke up and felt weak from
MACHETE winds they weren't angry anymore they
weren't angry at all they were thirsty and wanted to go to their mothers
they all looked at TRES he was
covered with the night his loud pulse
his strong breath TRES clapped his hands together their black surfaces one loud
cry to another his hands
became WIND ^ THROWING ^
FIRE
his hands were his congas his
hands were his congas



Para Mi Hermana en el Día de Pascua For My Sister, on Easter Day

While there is rain in its cup, as new as the
spit from a bay, and while the moon falls in
rivers, all of these things of the world
are emptied from you, pulled on a boat over the
smell of impermanence, in the muddy rushes, in
the breaking horizon.

Bird, your throat is full
of light, and it is thin; the tendrils of the voice
move in the hollow morning, reviving
the hair, glowing in the laurel.

This empty, the mud and the plum branches,
spread of the days, is for you a
permanent sun, it is a calabash in the
distances, the familiar, well-walked entrails
of the rose.

Unfold your
early linen and your golden earlobes, open
the rosy chambers of your hands, and there find
your stern crucifix, its hard married crosspieces; it will take from each fingernail a drop
of white blood, firm as mercury,
which resists the dew
under the sharp beating moon.

With the oil of the fields and the rosin of torches,
sweet as the hay in a panicked bird's stomach, sweet as a forest of crushed greetings,
your tender veins go, with
shuffling footsteps, with young linen and experience.

My sister, walk in these roads, feeling your

weight and your silent tongue, remembering
the distances, the repetitions of the moon.
Touch your arms, the branches of a dark star;
touch the density, raveling your plumes, gathering
the sky; spread corners against
the idiot suns, the copper faces, dotting
their mud across the fins of the sea.
Leave rocks in the sun, fuming its white
ocean with the smell of your hair, its
braids of dried rosemary and chamisa
Go to fields and railroads, my sister, open
your ribs, quieting the foxes, leaving space
for the lambs; part the morning in half, and
before everything, next the creatures
of your mother, and father, and sisters and brothers.
For them give your surface of
decreased stars, with a shaking of
tin, the silver water of your fingers.
Between your brother and mockery drive
your wings of joined iron, your spears of water,
your feathers of syllables and
the lyric splinters of your crying.
Go without fear, angel,
with no lies on your
feet, go to the center, in the face of
the empty.
Pierce the palm of shamed
gods, and draw your thread, explode
the quiet with lightning girandoles. Leave
meetings of cloud and fevers of
water, leave clover and leave roots of blood.
Sister, the ocean, the sky, the rain, wrap my
body in dusk gold, the burst of your feet, the pure
ridge of your song.



Canción

My voiceflower
Here are your five songs
My birdflower
Tree humming through the night
Eyes rimmed with lashes
Giving birth to the rain's dark hands
Here is your body beside me
Your sweat like moonlight's snails
My bleeding-rainbow flower
My whitestoneflower
Your lover travels through your dream to find you
Singing
Child of flowers
Sweet one that you are, my own:
Here
This is where I am
I am here

Mi flor de voces
 Tienes cinco canciones
Mi flor de pájaros
 Tu arbol zumbando la noche
Mi flor de pestañas
 Dando nacer a las manos oscuras de la lluvia
Mi flor de cuerpo desnudo
 Tu sudor los caracoles de la luz de luna
Mi flor de arcoíris que sangran
Mi flor de piedras blancas
Tu amante camina a través de tu sueño, buscándote

Te está cantando, mi niña de flores
Mi niña mi niña de flores
Estoy aquí estoy aquí estoy aquí



If You Leave

You hang up the phone. You think of his hands, roses uprooted from the dark earth. You think of him lying on the couch, his face a star in flames, his smile of hope. You go to the corner of your room. There, with a window on each side, like tall wings of glass, is an altar where you have put letters, photos, tiny bottles of silver, milagros—animals of mud with fierce eyes. You light a blue veladora and the sticker of the Virgen María moves with shadows beneath the flame. You put your hands together with fingers crossed and sit. You wait for hours. The windows throw white cubes of afternoon into your room, then red faces of twilight, purple sheets that hang from the ceiling. You get up and go to the phone again. You beep the ten buttons and your lover answers. You talk for a moment about nothing, then you tell her. That the end of your father happened fast.

Oh, my God, are you okay? she cries.

You ask her quietly if she will be there for you.

Let's talk about something else, about your father.

Of the things you hope from her, there are some she said you cannot ask. Months ago, she wanted you to move away with her. You told her you could not because you had to take care of him, his glowing body that lay on the couch, his laughing smile: he was your son now, your father was your child.

You can't do this to me, she had said, *if you leave me I'll kill myself I have the bottle of pills in my hand right now*

Comets that passed through your head, beside your father's as he calmly told you *Go mi'jo, go away for school, go live with her. I am getting better.* You said no, but his gentle strength won with silence. *Go, mi'jo, I want you to.*

You hold the phone to your ear. Things you cannot ask. You say all right and speak for a while and she wishes you well and you hang up. You return to the altar. Papi's eyes fill the room with dark light. The stars and the night join you. Your room is alive with rays and shadows, a dance from the gathering mountains, the twisting trees, the animals of dirt and snow, the clouds, the water trickling. You light another candle.

On the altar, you bring together the photo of her and the photo of him. You do not smell ashes, you smell only his rose hands, burning.



Elegy for Ronnie Burk

Red lions are crawling from the sun's throat

For Ronnie

The Lady of Dolphins drops needles from the typhoons of her eyes

For Ronnie

The butterflies of Tehuantepec razor toward beaches of ice
in the North

For Ronnie

Meteors of roses fall across the Golden Gate Bridge

For Ronnie

Ronnie has died Ronnie is gone

Ronnie Jaguar Queen of sand with a dress of pearl rivers
with eyes of burning diamonds

Ronnie

Ronnie an insect of blue jade quivering on the mind's window
Ronnie
Ronnie as strong as the bronze stars sung by Indio fathermother
Ronnie

The ghosts of the horses run in a halo for Ronnie
the Mexican fiddles curl the leaves of the wind
and the parrot's feathers
a gold and turquoise pot holds Ronnie's whispers

Ronnie who held me when I was a baby
Ronnie
Ronnie who was a Lady
Ronnie
Ronnie who fought the shadows of his heart
Ronnie

Tonight the pages of
the sky's music
fall quietly
To our hands



Heart of Rice Paper

inside is a dragonfly
 a field of candles
 the red rain of beans
 the teeth of blue corn
inside are the panting drums of the bulls
 the lanterns of newborn fingers

a gold moon tumbling on purple silk
the cracked flood of the mountains
a harp of deer throats
inside is a bird with no face that opens wings and stops sound
a cricket that touches its burning shadow
the secret of lips pressing and hands whispering
a guitar that bleeds a yellow lotus
inside are the tiny bones of the sea
the shriek of the hummingbird that drinks
inside is something and then it is gone
the sand of crushed snakeskins
the footprints of the rain
inside is the ink of crows on a white sky
the mirror of the evening that you polish with a blanket of flame
the mouth of the earth and the ear of the water
the stairs of silence and the maze of laughter
inside is the circle of pollen where the
fury of the colors begins
a buffalo tears through the burning
rice and turns white
an owl floats on the eyes of the water
and eats them
a theater of chanting cranes
inside is a crescent smile and it is a mother
the hive of children's murmurs
a jaguar that devours the fishscales of
the dawn
a tear that breaks lightning on the wind
a green shadow on a tongue
inside something is born and it is gone
and it is born again
can you hold your heart between your hands?
can you find it again though you still hold it?
can you fill your heart with the breath of a child?
can you stand before it and be a woman?
can you free its struggling coils into the wild flames of grass

and accept a single grain in your palms?

mahal kita

saranje

yollopoliuhqui

love is in all things

there is only love