

THE QUEEN OF SPAIN

A TRICOLOR FOR HER MAJESTY

I. THE ARTIST

Do you remember do you remember
The smell of static days of summer of
Blue skies blue homes hazy roads of
White trees white ties lazy oaths
And painted

Do you remember anticipation
It opens behind you it opens behind you
Like a warehouse door
It opens behind you you are backing out
Goodbye
Brand new
Goodbye
Liquid crystal
Goodbye

Goodbye to this
This dismal pantheon
These ancients and classics
They don't shine like you
Not a drip of white
Nor a drop of blue
No

Do you remember turning back
You don't turn back you'll lose your face
You don't turn back you can't turn back
With crystal blood you can't turn back
With liquid blood you only surge
You surge face-forward
Into the universe

And I the unstoppable
Your superior your overlord
I will bring you all you touch and see
Touch heavens divine

Yes you
White and blue

How I flash past
Same and same again
Same and same again
How I am new
I am not you
I am sure to be a wonder
Sure to make your barren eyes
See with wonder yet again

I have come to save your soul
You innocent one you
Of colors tranquil
Colors modern
Colors same and same again
What good are they now
Blind creature of the night
Who ventures out to
Long chanting tables
Long empty tables
To drown in a bay of
Pale black

To rise and shine and despair
You look for hope and guidance
But see nothing
You look for hope and guidance
With wide eyes
But you see nothing until
You see me

How I stream by
Gallant and noble
Upon my Babiaca of shining white and blue
How I live for this moment
How I live for you
Goodbye
God be with you

Reincarnate
Is what I am
Revitalized reinstated reborn
And manifest to all you
Who bear witness

I am new
I am Postmodern
No more of that Baroque
No more of that Deco
Which has been out of touch for so long
Out of touch with you
My most gracious companion

My thoughts do not take shape
As you would like them to
But thoughts are trivial matters
In this beautiful world

I am too new
Too young for this game of chess
My mind is in other lands cracked and broken
And waiting to be reborn
Like you

II. A TRAIN RIDE

I thought I saw the Queen of Spain
'Neath a white-washed dome which bore her name
And splayed over her
Like Olympus' under-side, where across black Phlegethon
Strutted ladies with devilish scarves and crying suitcases,
Where Arabic figures flipped through space
Calling to globed clusters dancing 'round their feet,
Where a ring fell and cracked on the marble shores.
Had we only left that morn? "A sorry crew,
A right detestable crew," she said, "I'm blue, I'm blue".
Rising over one hill you'd remarked, "Were it not
For these fragrant airs I'd feel so lonely," but that is not
Why the sparrows flew low today, and that is not
Why the beady, lacquer-tinged petals from Phnom Penh didn't arrive, and that is not
Why our laurels were found strung in uneven lines across the table, and that is not
Why she is blue, blue, blue.

She sat, that twisted Iberian hint in her eye,
And a police-man asked if I'd seen her,
And I said, "No, sir, I've not."

 "Should she chance
 Across your countenance,
 Take heed, sonny."

 "Why, you are
 A ragged sort of a man,
 A twisted fraud,
 A brute, I say, depart at once!"

Bearing her weight were best wishes
Which came in such profusion
That she thrashed to hold her head above them,
But her strained and mutinous aspect
Caused naught to blarney her
So she deigned to slip below and drowned.
I cried to the Gatekeeper, "Sad man,
Deliver me away. Sad man,
Deliver me away.
Let fly up in smoke from desolate coals
The sacrilegious disloyalty I've shown you.

Let nothing come between us again.
AMEN.”

Now the thirsty crown on the hangman’s chair
Lolled its tongue about the room,
Sweeping out the feet of a stately virgin –
Like the clock-hand it was.

I, out for a smoke,
Looked in and saw you consoling her,
But oh, how you berated her afterwards, and
Yes! it was a soggy, rainy day, and
No! love, there’s no love to be had tonight.

My, how my ingenious thoughts dance in their cage!

The ring is key, I think. You see,
It’s broken into four pieces,
Two big and two small,
Which won’t fit back together,
But which might be melted down
To make a flaxen shawl
Which you’d wear as you stroll
Through fields of burning heather.
We will bury it someday
In the church at Kilkelly,
But now that we’re headed north again with the trade winds
We won’t be seeing you for quite some time.

It was a doleful, dreary view when the olive girl left
So instead I watched the marble and granite fraternizing in the deadened land
As above, Helios gazed down at Tartaros
Whence envious, truculent rumblings rose
To drape their dull vines across our laps, and a plated metal barking sounded through the atrium.
Perfumes and pansies and pitted cherries flooded the vapors
Like so many flies drowned in liqueur,
While our fair city peeked in at the window, but the police-man,
A bronzed statuette of Lazarus in his plump hands,
Shut her out, crying, “Reinvent thyself!”
A hissing below, and the voyage commenced.

At the state-line we drifted under
A steel bridge, and there a man hung
With a constant, careless resolve
Which sparked lasting admirations unsung
Amidst our number, who truly were
Too soft, too romantic, too bruised, too young
To rise above the heathen lands
Yet might climb the ladder, rung by rung,
To see his worldly face, and learn his name,
And learn to speak in his forgotten tongue,
And breathing once more the turbid air
Let slip the reigns and to death be flung.

O sun in the trees, sun in the trees,
What have you seen before you've seen me?
Do you bounce off this steel rail?
We are in the lucid phase, I believe.
Yes, that's it.
Paris, son of Priam, take note:
We are coming for you.

O, but you –
Do you smile when called
The *Lacrimosa*?
Do you cry out,
“*Ne absorbeat eas tartarus*”?
Two terrors haunt our human condition:
The first, the fount from which passions spring,
The second, I shall tell you in time.

In a mirror-world we saw ourselves,
We made ourselves
As we were,
As we wished to be.
Gliding through the grasses
We were woe,
We were fervor,
We were those
Staring darkly into our forbidden futures,
Taunted by our haughty ghosts,
Weeping at their graves.

Near a signal we paused near an hour,
Yet we made nothing of the time.
The infernal whirring began anew,
Yet we never smiled the same again.

Two miles to the north,
The beggar of Sharon
Laid bare his neck on the grim guillotine
As ten thousand laughing limbs looked on.
Cried he, *missit me Dominus!*
As he cackled till the last.

The blood flew up in the salty air,
Twisting, inverting in helical stupor,
Discharging its noxious blue-green dainties
To do as they would with the world.
That fall, I believe it was the fall of the fall,
Mephistopheles struck seventeen tolls on the waiting chime and
Unholy November, stalking like a bright spring rain,
Loped across the Lozoya and
Peeked through Cybele's garden,
Thinking to crush the two lovers
Discounting his presence.

Hush, child, she weeps not for you.
What sounds are these to hit my dull mind?
You know that you, the most lovely maiden in the land,
Struck thrice by lightning,
Batting your ne'er-rested eyes,
Crying, crying, crying, crying,
Are what we face five times a day.
'Twas only winter's wail which six times did sweep us
Under the cemented barricade
Where coffee and sangria commiserated
In a mottled mess on the floor,
Yet who would have guessed
He would really come
And smite the Earth with a curse?

Hush, child, she weeps not for you.

Quiet, fool, she might overhear.
Her seat is folding under her, see?
Cannot you, in all your hellish power,
Save her?
That night
A lone trumpeter, James Price,
Blew minor scales
Up and down the line
Till his poetic, untimely death
Did us part.

Hush, child, she weeps not for you.
O, good police-man, where are you now?
Can you not cuff these maligning airy distractions?
See, she turns her head!
Surely she'll sell in Seville,
Make note of that,
She'll sell in lands cracked and broken,
She'll be reborn.
O, but only look into my eyes –
O, but only remember that
There are impossible things!

I accept and I protest.
Still the wind twists me
Into hideous forms, and
I find reason only
In these two straight rails,
My firmaments 'midst the waters,
My legionnaires,
My heroic third and fourth.

Alas, I am bid never continue.

So in Arlington Under, I leave you.
Recount the rest in my place.
Her Phrygian robes are flowing out the car
On all sides. Might she be swept under and
Shatter in miraculous, indifferent displays for us all.
Flow softly now, Sweet Holocaust,
Her face draws near.

You, who once plucked a flower from a triptych on a wall:
Dance a jerking step off a bridge in your flaxen shawl.

Hush, child, she weeps not for you.

What knows any man of glory?

Thou by the Indian Ganges' side

“Far less than these coasts,” he said,
Then cast his line.

Wear the print of his remembrance out

Say, now! They all do! Every one!

*Swifter than a weaver's shuttle
O remember that my life is wind*

Yes, it was just that morn.
Flow with boundless power, my lovely, she wants nothing.

III. THE GREAT CONANICUT WEDDING

She makes for a jagged Ganges,
Flings spots of her holy sweat upon us
As we consecrate the affair.

Here in this hallowed land
Splendor frolics on the crescent beach
While credit waits patiently behind the dam.

Turn over, tide.
Spring peeks through January's bare briars
To bless the quivering occasion, where

She is the beaten rocks and
She is the fleeting wings and
She is the half-tide kingdom.

Twenty feet down a ravine
Sallow men lay perished –
How they were treasured!

Yet she loves them most,
Loves us most,
Loves us all most.

No lesser shades dare cloud that aspect.
She is all that is less, she is the mooring
To which cling our doomed vessels in the sun's narrow eye,

A thoughtless precision lifting few to perch
Upon heaven's floor, a soggy maw swallowing many
In fond remembrance of their deeds.

Thus she suffuses our eyes and our mind,
Till we cry, "Take us! O, take us now,
We are yours – forever!"

So there is to be a marriage today,
In a chapel she has built for us, base and unruly,
Which she bids her winged deacons exalt,

Which she cherishes with tears in her eyes.
The inhuman face – such a wonder
That we deserve it!

Such a wonder that she turns not away
From a slip or a sigh – such a wonder,
Such a beauty, such a love,

Such a foolish, blind love,
Blind to the giver,
Blind to the heights and the follies,

Blind to remembrances
And journeys
And sorrows.

Yet who will resist:
When she weeps not for us
Nor any ideal?

And who will resist:
When nothing is the better
And nothing the worse?

Truly, who will resist
The fount from which passions spring?
Aye, not a soul.

A rambling breeze, bound for Madrid,
Mutters the rites on its way past
As we kiss her careless brow.