

In Living Color

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...fear of freedom, of which its possessor is not necessarily aware, makes him see ghosts. (Paulo Freire)

I

I crawled back into that black place:
Said hello to the darkness and felt the cold breath of that wind—
That same black breath from long ago when as a child alone,
Afraid of the darkness from behind the closet door,
With that same black breath escaping from the keyhole, I felt the fear—that fear.
That fear of the devil, that fear of life without love, that fear of being alone, that fear...

I am alone now:
I speak with words on paper for someone, anyone, to read—
Even that stranger come to say "hello".
I inhaled that stranger's breath—
That witch's breath—
I kissed the ice cold nipples erect—
With white breasts and rotted teeth—
I said "hello" and awoke.

I opened my eyes to that keyhole of my closet door staring,
Staring with that moon-lit glow, that pupil in a metal frame,
Like a single eye staring, on its side like me on my side in bed.
I fell asleep—
I awoke:
Another bad dream at 3:00 a.m. and I thought to myself:
"Oh, what a wonderful world..."

I heard the morning birds sing through that darkness and fell back to sleep—
Just then, when Louis Armstrong came by to say: "Hi".
We talked of "skies of blue and clouds of white".
We had a drink and parted—
"Satchmo" went back to from wherever he came.

I woke up that morning to the white of my blinds—
Felt the morning breeze through the opened window—
I remembered that witch with white breasts and smelled my boss's breath
And I said to myself:
"Oh, what a wonderful world..."

II

The morning cup of coffee and cigarette with the first conscious sigh of morning heat without wind;
The first morning view from the balcony to make sure the city seems just right.
The offering of a glance to a neighbor—
An old man and his bible—
Like an old rooster with a silent voice and Captain Ahab charm.
The courtyard watchdog of moral decay.
The courtyard pope with the inspecting stare of passersby.

I offer the expected wave to the old man on his balcony.
I think to myself "Viva il Papa" and smile.
He always raises his hand with a certain papal flare and nod of the head.
He offers his "God bless you my son" with a clearing of phlegm.
You can almost taste his approval or disapproval by the shape of his mouth.

While in the courtyard it's obvious you're in his domain:
The courtyard pope and his perpetual glass of red wine.
I think "Viva il Papa".
I offer the wave and smile.
I turn my head toward the East—
Toward Sears Tower to see its shape in the distance under the sun.
Then I go back inside.
I turn on the radio and how ironic to hear
Revolution
By the Beatles and a man named Lennon.
And I sing to myself:
"Oh, what a wonderful world...!"



Drawing: Janek Janowicz