

Four poems

Fernando Cruz

To see you again

(dedicated to Marie, Marin County, CA)

I thought much
about you last night.
About how many things
I want to say,
and how much
I want to tell you
that I love you
and that I miss you.

How I wish
to see you again.
To look into your eyes
and see the smile
I grew to love
and hear the laughter,
so sincere,
once again.

And we would talk
about life,
when the land was kissed
by the rising sun,
and the moon
blessed the cane fields
the way it doesn't
elsewhere.

We would talk again
about days gone by
when things were simpler
and summer was longer.

We would share
food and wine
and laugh
with all around us.

I always loved you
and wished
I came from your blood
inheriting all the things
I cherish in you.
But still,
In many ways,
I hold you in my veins.

Remember when we met?
Destiny led me to you
for destiny knew
that I would love
to know you,
that somewhere,
in the stars,
it was to be so.

But if I can't
see you again,
I will always remember
your face so sweet,
your smile so open,
your laughter so joyful,
you,
so much bigger than life.

And if I can't
see you again now,
I know I will
see you again
as our lives unfold
in ways
we can't foretell
or comprehend.

But then, I know,
we will be in the land

kissed by the rising sun,
where the moon
blesses the cane fields,
where things are simpler
and summers longer,
much longer.

December 19, 1998

Losing someone

(dedicated to a friend)

If you ever lost a friend,
you know
the anguish of the absence,
the self-doubt that guilt can bring,
the darkness known in sadness,
the constant pain
that slowly cripples
while wishing she never left.

If you ever lost a love,
you know
the hollowness caused
by the loss of part of you,
the searing loneliness
that replaces
by gone moments of sheer joy,
the numbing pain of the cold
that sets in where her body
always kept you warm.

If you ever lost a sister,
you know
the anxiety you feel
every time you wonder
where she is,
what she is doing,
the hellish burden
of the unsettled question
of her safety,
the danger she may face,
the company she keeps,
always on your shoulders.

But if you ever found a loved one,
long lost in the shadows of time,
then you know
the sheer joy of the reunion,
the ecstasy of hearing
that familiar voice,
the desire to know

every thing you missed
over the long years.
And then you promise,
to whom ever may want to hear,
that no matter what comes,
no matter what may,
you will never again, ever,
let her go and disappear.

Friday, May 16, 2003

A vida é assim

Inspirado num poema de Regina Spektor

A vida é assim:

Somos jovens até não sermos
E amamos até não mais amarmos.
Rimos até chorarmos.
Lutamos até perder as forças
E choramos até as lágrimas secarem.
E todos nós temos de respirar
Até a respiração acabar.

Mas a vida não é só isso.

A vida também é assim:

Olhamos para dentro de nós
Sem sabermos bem quem somos.
Fazemos as nossas escolhas
Aceitando o que escolhemos.
Sentimos amor crescer em nós
Que um dia oferecemos a alguém.
E dia após dia esse amor cresce
No coração desse alguém.
E seguimos de braço dado
Dando as mãos pelo caminho
Vivemos a nossa vida
Sem queremos magoar
E querendo não ter dor.
Mas quando a dor vem choramos
Até as lágrimas secarem.
E então seguimos a vida
Mas melhores
Mais cheios
Mais humanos
Mais nós
Por termos nesta vida
Conhecido esse alguém.



Sao Sebastiao fortress, Island of Mozambique

The old fort

I am not into sadness
or nostalgia,
but this photo
makes me wonder.

This photo makes me think.
Makes me think
about the men
with sweat covered faces
as they labored
during the construction
of these endless walls.

This photo makes me think
of the stones
and the brutal work
that turned them
into their final shape.

Humble people,
with good skilled hands,

artists,
artists all of them,
whose names
were never
engraved in history.

It makes me think
of those who
stood guard duty
on these walls.
Sweating profusely
in uniforms that were
made for other climates,
for the European climate,
than to these tropical places.

How many days of hunger
must they have felt?
How many nights
did they try to fall asleep
in dormitories as hot as ovens?
How many times
did they stay awake
as hordes of mosquitoes,
hidden during the day,
came out at night
to feast on the blood of these men,
not letting them sleep?

Those men who,
in a couple of hours,
would have to get up
and stand guard
for the umpteenth time.

Or would return
to the back breaking work
of cutting stone.
That infinitely repetitive stone.
Another stifling night
without a single breeze.

Another night
when one could not even hear

the ocean,
so loud was the infernal noise
the silence of the night would make.

How many men
must have spent their guard duty hours
fantasizing about the tall ship,
and later,
that no less nauseous
and smoking freight ship,
that would take them back
to the land of their birth,
the land they had left
only because
there was no work for them there.

But even if they were ever to return,
for one reason or another,
their names would be
forever buried in those stones.

Buried countless times
by the shouts of the foremen
and by the claps of the whips
that never ceased to stop tormenting these men.

Men forever nameless
for their names would end up
detaching themselves from their bodies,
forever nameless.

These men,
yes.
These men
were the ones
who gave us this heritage in the photo,
this photo that made me think.

Saturday, March 24, 2018