

# The Black Heralds

*& Other Early Poems*

**Also from Shearsman Books:**

**César Vallejo:**

*(all edited & translated by Valentino Gianuzzi & Michael Smith)*

*Trilce*

*Complete Later Poems 1923-1938*

*Selected Poems*

**Michael Smith:**

*The Purpose of the Gift — Selected Poems*

*Maldon & Other Translations*

César Vallejo

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*& Other Early Poems*

*Edited and translated by*  
*Michael Smith and Valentino Gianuzzi*

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## Introduction

César Vallejo's early poems have had a mixed reception from scholars, critics and readers of poetry. From the vicious local criticism directed at his first printed poems, to the favourable reviews of his first book, *The Black Heralds*, and then to the contemporary, more complex analysis of this early work, the literary merit of his initial output has been a matter of some controversy, especially when compared to the evident mastery of his second book, *Trilce*, or the later poems written in Europe. After the poet's death, *The Black Heralds* tended to be seen as a mere stepping-stone towards his mature work, a book bearing only inklings of originality and therefore having only a limited value of its own. Later it was hailed, somewhat anachronistically, as one of the first examples of literary Indigenism, and was studied as such by a handful of scholars who continued the line founded by the Peruvian essayist José Carlos Mariátegui, perhaps the first real advocate of the poetry of *The Black Heralds*. Despite this, it was still taken as no more than an augury of future genius. Most recently, Vallejo's early poetry has been praised not only as an important example of post-modernista verse, but also — literary merits aside — as original testimony of a time when the first efforts at poetic experimentation and renewal were being made. Nevertheless, divergent opinions persist. As in the case of Yeats, Vallejo's early poetry is accused by its detractors of being aestheticist and too dependent on an already trite and conventional lyrical tradition. Although one may concede that, at its worst, *The Black Heralds* is rather distant from contemporary sensibilities — in the same way that Pre-Raphaelite verse is regarded by the English reader today — to judge any book a failure on the basis of its less accomplished poems would be unfair. Perhaps what is most important is that Vallejo's first collection has always been a favourite among readers — the case of Yeats's early poetry is again a good comparison here — containing as it does many of the poet's most popular and best-known pieces: 'To My Brother Miguel', 'Dead Idyll', 'Exergasia', 'This Bread of Ours' and 'The Black Heralds'. Furthermore, the book's precise architecture invites the reader to consider the work as a whole, one greater

than the sum of its parts. Seen as a mosaic or patchwork of diverse aesthetics — and the different styles that the work presents is something that has been emphasised by many scholars — *The Black Heralds* is an important achievement, a work that can still be read, and studied rewardingly, from cover to cover.

## I

Little is known about Vallejo's first attempts at poetry. Anecdotes abound concerning his childhood days, pointing out his early interest in literature and poetry as well as his concern with word-play and rhyme, but these anecdotes belong rather to hagiography than to a proper biography, and they should be taken as such. The extant school-records seem to suggest that he was a gifted student, indicating that he excelled not only in literature, but also in mathematics and geography. Not much can be deduced from these accounts, in fact, and the inner and poetical life of the young Vallejo can therefore only be the subject of speculation.

Vallejo published his first poems at the age of nineteen. Only recently rediscovered by Hugo Arias Hidalgo, they appeared in a little-known magazine in the Andean city of Cerro de Pasco, where Vallejo stayed for some months in 1911. These first two compositions are youthful, post-Romantic imitations, and although both are rhetorically careless, the first, simply titled 'Sonnet', already reveals an early disposition to the pastoral, intimations of which would persist even in his first collection. Their publication, although only in a local paper, reveals the poet's first search for a wider audience. But more evident proof that Vallejo was already striving for some literary glory is the sonnet quartet published by Clemente Palma in the fancy magazine *Variedades*, which also appeared in 1911. Vallejo had sent this sonnet, dedicated to a girl named Pilar, in the hope that it would be published; and eventually it was, albeit in fragmentary form and accompanied by a malignant commentary from Palma, one of the most respected and feared literary critics of the time. His comment was not lacking in sarcasm: 'Do you really believe, dear Romeo, that we have not noticed that your sonnet is an acrostic — one of the greatest poetic affectations — aimed at

some lady named Pilar, whose last name we won't print so as not to embarrass the girl? And in fact the sonnet is so bad that it would embarrass not only a *pilar*, but a whole column of the Senate'. Yet, instead of being disheartened, Vallejo seems to have continued firmly with his poetic apprenticeship.

Some years later, when the poet was already living and studying in Trujillo, new poems would be put before the public. This time they would appear in the school magazine *Cultura Infantil*, where he would publish mostly didactic compositions, aimed at his elementary-school students. Ten poems appeared between 1913 and 1917, including only a couple with a more personal tone — such as that written on his brother's death, which precedes a similar poem included in *The Black Heralds*. The fact that the final one, titled 'Babel', was later included in Vallejo's first collection, and also that he never refrained from publishing in the magazine despite having other outlets for his writing, confirms that the poet had no low opinion of these compositions, even though they were mainly written for a juvenile audience. To read them is to witness an aspect of the poet very seldom revealed in his later work: they remind us that Vallejo spent most of his adult life in Peru working as a teacher, and that part of his poetic output was to be devoted to this pedagogical endeavour.

On the other hand, it was not long before a new opening for Vallejo's more personal pieces appeared, in the shape of two local newspapers: *La Reforma* and *La Industria*. Both publications chart Vallejo's ascent from skilled rhymer to competent poet, since it is here that the first versions of a score of poems later collected in *The Black Heralds* would be printed. The poet's appearance in these publications must also be linked to his involvement with the literary group of young intellectuals, most of them university students, who would eventually be known as *la Bohemia de Trujillo* ('Trujillo's Bohemia'), and later as the *Grupo Norte* ('North Group'). It included, among others, the essayist Antenor Orrego, José Eulogio Garrido, Federico Esquerre, Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre (later founder of the APRA party) and the poets Alcides Spelucín and Óscar Imaña. Vallejo's relations with these writers are the key to understanding his early literary life. Members of this group would become the first champions of his verse; Óscar

Imaña would publish poems alongside Vallejo's, while Antenor Orrego would thoroughly review his first book, and would later write the introduction for *Trilce*.

It is not easy to imagine the poet's contrasting stances at this time: both university bohemian and school teacher. The image of the poet-teacher was evoked later by one of Vallejo's former students, who would become the novelist *Ciro Alegría* (1909-1967).<sup>1</sup> Though highly idealised and embellished with the patina of benign remembrance, Alegría's description of Vallejo is one of the few first-hand accounts of his life at school, and also of his local fame. As he writes, the poet was at this time already noted for his bohemian pose, his long hair, and his poetry: 'In Trujillo, Vallejo had fierce detractors as well as enthusiastic sympathizers. At home, as in all the homes in town, opinions were divided. The majority attacked him'.

Further adverse reactions are attested elsewhere, and, as his biographer Juan Espejo Asturrizaga suggests, this would be one of the reasons for Vallejo leaving Trujillo. Thus, after much hardship, including sentimental deception and harsh criticism of his poetry, Vallejo abandoned his Law studies at the University of La Libertad in Trujillo and, as so many provincial young writers of his generation had done before, he left for the capital. It was the end of 1917.

## II

It must not be forgotten that another, perhaps more important reason why Vallejo travelled to Lima was his desire to become involved in the city's literary circles, and to publish his first poetry collection. His plans were clear from the start, and it is surprising to see just how rapidly he became immersed in the city's cultural life. The title poem to his first book was placed in the magazine *Mundo Limeño* in January, and he interviewed Abraham Valdelomar (perhaps the most talked-about writer of

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<sup>1</sup> Alegría, *Ciro*. 'El César Vallejo que yo conocí'. *Cuadernos Americanos*, vol. XVIII, N. 6, November-December, 1944, pp. 175-191. Reprinted more recently in Alegría's *Novela de mis novelas*. Edited by Ricardo Silva-Santisteban (Lima, 2004).

the time), as well as the cult poet José María Eguren, a few weeks later. His journalistic connections, which would later garner positive reviews for his first book, were enhanced to the extent that he was selected to appear in a much-publicised but never published anthology of contemporary Peruvian poetry, edited by the critic and journalist Carlos Pérez Cánepa. But although he was starting to leave a mark on Lima's literary mainstream, Vallejo, with no book to represent his work, was far from being recognised as a leading poet.

Although its imminent appearance had been announced at least a year previously, *The Black Heralds* began to circulate in Lima only in July 1919. According to Juan Espejo Asturrizaga, Vallejo had already written more than 50 of the 64 poems in the book by the time he had left Trujillo for the capital, but this statement must be treated with caution. His life in the capital should not be underestimated, as this was a crucial period in his poetic apprenticeship. We know from the score of early versions published before 1917 that some of the poems from the book were already being written, yet it is important to note that Vallejo seems to have assembled them while already living in Lima.

The first known reference to the collection as such appears in a letter written by the poet to his friends back in Trujillo, dated in Lima on 27 February 1918, although as yet there is no mention of a title, nor of the contents. The next reference is in an article by Abraham Valdelomar, 'The genesis of a great poet: César A. Vallejo, the poet of tenderness', which appeared in March. It was perhaps the first praise of Vallejo to be published in the capital and therefore had wider resonance. The article included a sample of his poems, and the title of the collection is mentioned for the first time. Valdelomar would then go on to refer to the book again in an interview a few weeks later, saying that he would be writing a prologue for it. After this, there is silence concerning the collection until its publication almost a year later. Theories for the delay in its appearance have been manifold. The most widespread one (proposed by Espejo Asturrizaga) maintains that the book remained with the printer, pending Valdelomar's prologue, but it is hard to imagine someone as determined as Vallejo waiting almost a year for a prologue that never came.

Whatever the motives, it is not unreasonable to believe that the writer, as some critics have held, took advantage of this setback and corrected his poems, perhaps even restructuring the book and including newly-written pieces.

*The Black Heralds* was well received by the critics. It must be said, however, that all the reviewers knew Vallejo personally and, unlike the malignant commentators back in Trujillo, they respected his work. Despite this warm welcome, Vallejo seems to have wandered away from Lima's literary circles. Already working as a teacher, and later as a substitute principal, at an elementary school, the poet was intent on making a living and perhaps this is the reason that he had no time to worry about literary fame. However, it would not be long before he started work on his second, ground-breaking collection.

### III

It is interesting to note that, at the time of its publication, *The Black Heralds* was hailed as a Peruvian example of symbolist poetry. From the epigraph, Vallejo's book dares the reader to go beyond appearances and to decipher its hidden meaning. The apocalyptic title of the collection, underlined by the title poem standing at its gateway, must not only be read as an example of Vallejo's sombre view of life but also as meaning that — as in the apocalypse — the book is a revelation of truths that may only be reached through symbols and allegories. One is invited to take part in the poet's experience, and to solve the enigmas encrypted therein.

A risky reading of Vallejo's first collection, but one that can be attempted, is to take it as a learning journey, as a book that charts the author's own poetic and expressive apprenticeship. Each section is a stage that the learning poet must undergo before reaching poetic maturity. Of course, this is not to say that there is a linear or chronological development from the first poem to the last, since, as in every journey, there are twists and turns. But nevertheless, one can see Vallejo's poetic mutation and maturation clearly embedded in the book's architecture.

The initial section contains some of the most dated compositions — if not chronologically, then at least aesthetically.

It is not unreasonable to assert that Vallejo was aware of the heavy debt these poems owed to the dominant style of the time. The section's title, 'Swift soffits', so often taken as an example of his insistence on aestheticism, can also be read ironically, as describing a section that includes a handful of compositions the poet consciously considered pretty but, in the end, merely decorative and written almost in a hurry. The poems are rife with extravagant metaphors and images of exotic landscapes. They are also full of the biblical images that were so dominant in, for example, the *fin-de-siècle* fiction of Clemente Palma, and which showed a disposition to a blasphemous pose, inherited from the French *poètes maudits*.

The next section, 'Divers', marks, after the superficial 'soffits', the first submergence into the depths of lyrical expression. Its threshold could not have been better chosen, as 'The Spider' is a piece that shatters the style of the previous poems. Devoid of wild images, it is a clear and calculated description of a spider's agony, completely bereft of sentimentality but not of sentiment. Its economy of words is surprising if compared to the poems that precede it:

It is a spider that trembled fixed  
in a blade of stone;  
its abdomen on one side,  
its head on the other.

With so many feet the poor thing, and it cannot  
even sort itself. And, seeing it  
astounded in such a moment,  
today that traveller has given me such sorrow.

The poem also shows one of Vallejo's constant poetic themes: the conflict between the material and spiritual, between body and soul, or between instinct and reason, symbolised here by the spider's abdomen and head, and which resonates throughout the poem.

'Of the Earth', the third section, is permeated by the theme of love, mostly a tortured one because of the absence of the beloved. It includes compositions from different periods, some of

them still replete with wild imagery, although others are written with a more limpid, though no less intense style. Such is the case of the famous ‘Dregs’, whose starting lines reveal Vallejo at his lyrical best:

This evening it’s raining, as never before; and I don’t  
want to go on living, heart.

This evening is sweet. Why shouldn’t it be?  
It is dressed in grace and suffering; it is dressed as a woman.

The fourth section records a nostalgic vision of the past, one that contrasts with most of the nativistic poetry of the time, that is usually set in a golden age of unreachable and now-lost glory. Even though the *modernista* stereotypes and the love for affected images are present, what is somewhat original about Vallejo’s poems in this section is that they are set not *in illo tempore*, but in an Andean *hic et nunc*, where what is most important (despite the title) is not so much the glorious past of the Incan empire, but the hardships and joys of present day Andean life. This section also chronicles the slow destruction of the rural world brought about by modern life; in the closing poem, one of the best in the book, the speaker, living now in a Byzantium-like city, expresses his nostalgia for his beloved country:

What will you be doing at this very hour, my sweet,  
Andean Rita  
of the wild reed and the dusk berry;  
now that Byzantium smothers me, and that blood  
dozes, like insipid brandy, inside me.

[...]

She must be at the door staring at the cloud-lined sky,  
and then trembling she will say: ‘Jesus! How cold it is!’  
And on the roof-tiles a savage bird will cry.

The poem’s Rita, for which most critics find some real-life counterpart or other, must also be taken as a symbol of Andean

life, of the poet's origins, or of domestic happiness and warmth. In any case, the savage bird's final song is a sign of fatality, a presage that this ideal longed-for world will ultimately be dead forever.

An ascent is achieved in 'Thunders'. This is the longest section, and the heart of the book. The poet's social worries appear here among other pieces of existential angst and some love poems.

Vallejo's concern for social issues are evident even in his earliest poems. Some pieces written for children, such as 'Summertime' and 'Dark' were meant to teach a certain compassion for the poor and for the working classes; the poem's speaker, however, was distant. But in his first book, in poems like 'This Bread of Ours' and 'The Wretched Supper', Vallejo takes his place among the hungry, and the speaker himself is one of the poor. His later political poetry has its roots in these pieces.

Finally, home is the place where the poet finally arrives, for it is with the peacefulness and sadness of domestic life ('Songs of hearth') that the book ends. Vallejo saves the best poems for last and the aesthetics of these last compositions reveal him at his most personal. The ornamental language is lost, the decorative 'soffits' are replaced by a striking simplicity of language. Thus, the road from 'Sacred Unleafing' to 'Exergasia' is the road back home, the road to Vallejo's origins. Only from here could the composition of *Trilce*, perhaps the most original poetry book in the language, be possible.

#### IV

One would think that Vallejo's early poetry, lacking as it does the syntactical and lexical experimentation of his later work, would be easier to translate. That would be an error. For all its simplicity, much of the charm of the poetry of *The Black Heralds* rests on its musicality and rhythm, on the allure of rhyme and metre, that so often makes a poem memorable. As with all poetry heavily reliant on the prosody of its own language, it is precisely the original music of the poem that suffers most in the translation process, and the translator must somehow try to compensate for this loss. Once stripped of their original *melopœia*, as Pound would

call it, the pieces in *The Black Heralds* run the risk of becoming sentimental lyrics or prosaic descriptions. It has been our endeavour to try to account for this difficulty, not by attempting rhyming translations, which would make this book a collection of unfaithful versions of Vallejo, but by attempting to suggest a rhythm, different from the original but nonetheless functional in English. Although his *Imitations* has achieved notoriety for its rather debonair treatment of the originals, Robert Lowell was at least right when he remarked that ‘Strict metrical translators still exist. They seem to live in a world untouched by contemporary poetry. Their difficulties are bold and honest, but they are taxidermists, not poets, and their poems are likely to be stuffed birds.’ We can only hope that our versions are alive and can fly, even if their singing is suggestive of, rather than copies of their originals. It is, of course, our readers who will be the ultimate arbiters of our success or failure.

Another challenge was trying to carry into English the diverse styles and linguistic registers present in Vallejo’s early poetry, including the Romantic images, the wild *modernista* metaphors, the Peruvianisms, the prosaic phrases and the Spanish idioms on which a poem’s whole structure can often rely. However, the two translators signing this introduction, given their cultural, geographical, linguistic, personal and age differences (and who have, paradoxically, never met personally), are well-suited to attempt reaching this poetical polyphony. We hope that the English reader can manage to hear Vallejo’s different voices — brought to their completion with this final volume of his complete poems — through our sometimes harmoniously and at other times conflictively chosen words.

Valentino Gianuzzi  
Lima, 2006

Michael Smith  
Dublin, 2006



# Los heraldos negros

*Qui potest capere capiat*

EL EVANGELIO

# The Black Heralds

*Qui potest capere capiat*

THE GOSPEL

## LOS HERALDOS NEGROS

Hay golpes en la vida, tan fuertes . . . Yo no sé!  
Golpes como del odio de Dios; como si ante ellos,  
la resaca de todo lo sufrido  
se empozara en el alma . . . Yo no sé!

Son pocos; pero son . . . Abren zanjas oscuras  
en el rostro más fiero y en el lomo más fuerte.  
Serán talvez los potros de bárbaros atilas;  
o los heraldos negros que nos manda la Muerte.

Son las caídas hondas de los Cristos del alma,  
de alguna fe adorable que el Destino blasfema.  
Esos golpes sangrientos son las crepitaciones  
de algún pan que en la puerta del horno se nos quema.

Y el hombre . . . Pobre . . . pobre! Vuelve los ojos, como  
cuando por sobre el hombro nos llama una palmada;  
vuelve los ojos locos, y todo lo vivido  
se empoza, como un charco de culpa, en la mirada.

Hay golpes en la vida, tan fuertes . . . Yo no sé!

## THE BLACK HERALDS

There are blows in life, so powerful . . . I don't know!  
Blows as from God's hatred; as if before them,  
the backlash of everything suffered  
were to dam up in the soul . . . I don't know!

They are few; but they are . . . They open dark furrows  
in the fiercest face and in the strongest side.  
Maybe they could be the horses of barbarous Attilas;  
or the black heralds Death sends us.

They are the deep abysses of the soul's Christs,  
of some revered faith Destiny blasphemes.  
Those gory blows are the cracklings of a bread  
that burns-up on us at the oven's door.

And man . . . Poor . . . poor! He turns his eyes,  
as when a slap on the shoulder calls us;  
he turns his crazed eyes, and everything lived  
is dammed up, like a pond of guilt, in his gaze.

There are blows in life, so powerful . . . I don't know!

## **Plafones ágiles**

## **Swift Soffits**

## DESHOJACIÓN SAGRADA

Luna! Corona de una testa inmensa,  
que te vas deshojando en sombras gualdas!  
Roja corona de un Jesús que piensa  
trágicamente dulce de esmeraldas!

Luna! Alocado corazón celeste  
¿por qué bogas así, dentro la copa  
llena de vino azul, hacia el oeste,  
cual derrotada y dolorida popa?

Luna! Y a fuerza de volar en vano,  
te holocaustas en ópalos dispersos:  
tú eres talvez mi corazón gitano  
que vaga en el azul llorando versos! . . .

## SACRED UNLEAFING

Moon! Crown of an ample brow,  
unleafing in weld-coloured shades!  
Red crown of a pondering Jesus  
tragically mellow with emeralds!

Moon! Wild celestial heart,  
why do you sail so, inside a cup  
brimming with blue wine, westward,  
your stern stricken and wrecked?

Moon! And trying in vain to fly,  
in scattered opals you go up in flames:  
you are perhaps my gypsy heart  
that wanders in the blue — weeping verses! . . .

## COMUNIÓN

Linda Regia! Tus venas son fermentos  
de mi noser antiguo y del champaña  
negro de mi vivir!

Tu cabello es la ignota raicilla  
del árbol de mi vid.  
Tu cabello es la hilacha de una mitra  
de ensueño que perdí!

Tu cuerpo es la espumante escaramuza  
de un rosado Jordán;  
y ondea, como un látigo beatífico  
que humillara a la víbora del mal!

Tus brazos dan la sed de lo infinito,  
con sus castas hespérides de luz,  
cual dos blancos caminos redentores,  
dos arranques murientes de una cruz.  
Y están plasmados en la sangre invicta  
de mi imposible azul!

Tus pies son dos heráldicas alondras  
que eternamente llegan de mi ayer!  
Linda Regia! Tus pies son las dos lágrimas  
que al bajar del Espíritu ahogué,  
un Domingo de Ramos que entré al Mundo,  
ya lejos para siempre de Belén!

## COMMUNION

Regal Beauty! Your veins are ferments  
of my ancient nonbeing and of the black  
champagne of my living!

Your hair is the unknown rootlet  
of the tree of my vine.  
Your hair is the strand of a splendid  
mitre I lost!

Your body is the frothing tumult  
of a crimsoned Jordan;  
and it undulates, like a beatific lash  
that humiliated the serpent of evil!

Your arms yield the thirst for the infinite,  
with their chaste Pleiades of light,  
as two white redemptive roads,  
two dying births of a cross.  
And they are formed in the unconquered blood  
of my unattainable blue!

Your feet are two heraldic larks  
eternally arriving from my yesterday!  
Regal Beauty! Your feet are the two tears  
I stifled in my descent from the Spirit,  
on a Palm Sunday I entered the World,  
now forever distant from Bethlehem!

## NERVAZÓN DE ANGUSTIA

Dulce hebrea, desclava mi tránsito de arcilla;  
desclava mi tensión nerviosa y mi dolor . . .  
Desclava, amada eterna, mi largo afán y los  
dos clavos de mis alas y el clavo de mi amor!

Regreso del desierto donde he caído mucho;  
retira la cicuta y obséquiame tus vinos:  
espanta con un llanto de amor a mis sicarios,  
cuyos gestos son férreas cegueras de Longinos!

Desclávame mis clavos ¡oh nueva madre mía!  
¡Sinfonía de olivos, escancia tu llorar!  
Y has de esperar, sentada junto a mi carne muerta,  
cuál cede la amenaza, y la alondra se va!

Pasas . . . vuelves . . . Tus lutos trenzan mi gran cilicio  
con gotas de curare, filos de humanidad,  
la dignidad roquera que hay en tu castidad,  
y el judithesco azogue de tu miel interior.

Son las ocho de una mañana en crema brujo . . .  
Hay frío . . . Un perro pasa royendo el hueso de otro  
perro que fue . . . Y empieza a llorar en mis nervios  
un fósforo que en cápsulas de silencio apagué!

Y en mi alma hereje canta su dulce fiesta asiática  
un dionisiaco hastío de café . . . !

## NERVOUS FRENZY OF ANGUISH

Sweet Hebrewess, unvail my clay transit;  
unvail my nervous tension and my pain . . .  
Unvail, eternal beloved, my long care and  
the two nails of my wings and the nail of my love!

I am back from the desert where I often fell;  
put away the hemlock and offer me your wines:  
with a moan of love, frighten off my assassins,  
whose features are Longinus's steadfast blindnesses!

Unvail my nails, O new mother of mine!  
Symphony of olive-trees, pour out your weeping!  
And you will wait, sitting near my dead flesh,  
for the threat to yield, for the lark to be gone!

You pass . . . come back . . . your mourning braids my hair-cloth  
with curare drops, ridges of humanity,  
the rocky dignity that lies in your chastity,  
and the judithian quicksilver of your inner honey.

It's eight in a charmer cream-coloured morning . . .  
It's cold . . . A dog goes by gnawing the bone of another  
dog that passed . . . And a match I extinguished  
in capsules of silence begins to weep on my nerves!

And in my heretic soul a Dionysiac loathing of coffee  
sings its sweet Asiatic festival . . . !

## BORDAS DE HIELO

Vengo a verte pasar todos los días,  
vaporcito encantado siempre lejos . . .  
Tus ojos son dos rubios capitanes;  
tu labio es un brevísimo pañuelo  
rojo que ondea en un adiós de sangre!

Vengo a verte pasar; hasta que un día,  
embriagada de tiempo y de crueldad,  
vaporcito encantado siempre lejos,  
la estrella de la tarde partirá!

Las jarcias; vientos que traicionan; vientos  
de mujer que pasó!  
Tus fríos capitanes darán orden;  
y quien habrá partido seré yo . . .

## MAINSAILS OF ICE

I come to see you each day,  
enchanted steamer always distant . . .  
Your eyes are two blonde captains;  
your lip is the smallest red kerchief  
waving a farewell of blood!

I come to see you pass; until one day,  
intoxicated with time and cruelty,  
enchanted steamer always distant,  
the star of evening will be parting!

The rigging; winds that betray; the winds  
of a woman who has passed!  
Your cold captains will give their orders;  
and it will be I who will have parted . . .