

THE ART OF POETRY

To Raúl Castellanos

Anguish exists.

Man uses his old disasters like a mirror.

An hour or so after dusk
the man picks up the painful remnants of his day
and worried sick he puts them right next to his heart
he sweats like a TB patient fighting for his life
and sinks into his deep lonely rooms.
There buried in his thoughts he smokes
he'd like to invent ruinous cobwebs on the ceiling
he hates the flower's fresh look
he withdraws into his own asphyxiating skin
he looks at his coarse feet
he thinks his bed's his grave day after day
he doesn't have a penny to his name
he's hungry
and breaks into sobs.

But men all other men
bare their chests to the sun without a care
or to the killings in the streets
they lift the faces of the loaves out of the ovens
like a generous banner against hunger
they laugh with children until even the air hurts
they cram tiny footsteps into the wombs of blessed women
they split open like fruit rocks obstinate in their solemnity
they sing naked into the inviting glass of water
they joke with the sea taking it by the horns playfully
they build houses of light in the song-filled wilderness
they get drunk like God everywhere
they set their fists against despair
their avenging fires against crime

their love with its interminable roots
against hatred's vicious scythe.

Yes, anguish exists.

Like despair
crime
or hate.

Who should the poet's voice be for?
[HSM]