

## Lorraine Caputo – Five Poems



### Wading The Mist

A five-day rain  
has ebbed and flowed,  
the sea has foamed  
muddy-brown.  
Swamps & rivers  
have overflowed,  
isolating our villages.

*This morning     for a few short moments,  
a ray of sun sheened  
on the slickened roads...*

Under umbrellas  
women have sold  
breads & fruits.  
Stevedores have run barefoot  
through the markets, shirts plastered  
to muscular backs.  
We have waded streets  
to damp homes.

& I have become  
chilled to the soaked bone.

*I fall asleep*

*& when I awaken  
cloud-shrouded dusk  
is falling early  
& a dry, warm wind blows.*

*But soon  
another shower wettens  
the sodden night.*

## **Bojo** (selections)

### **V.**

Morning dawns light golden with bird song,  
cock crows, cow lowing. Some where  
a cricket still rasps. Swift clouds pass  
across the *sierra*, over the valleys of  
patch-work farms. On a hill side  
three horses graze. A rubber-booted man,  
machete in hand, walks down that pasture.

In a wattle & daub house, the  
family awakens. Mother pats *arepas*, the *chamos*  
prepare for school. Parrots leave their cage  
& stroll outside to squawk & dance  
in a tree. *Abuelo* sets the monkey  
on a chain in the garden where  
the saints stand mute in their shrines.

### **VI.**

Thicker clouds cast shadows upon hills, now  
& again reveal the sun. Wind still  
blows. Corn leaves rustle. On a steep  
slope, a man plants pumpkin. In a  
*taller*, Noel carves a lion from cedar,  
wood curling between his thick fingers. A  
quick rain patters on the tin roof.

### **VII.**

*Tarde* arrives with a shower. Water puddles  
in the school yard. In one room,  
*chamos* sing & recite poetry to the

guests. After lunch these youth gather in  
the library, viewing a movie, seats tightly  
circled around the TV set, two boys  
in wheel-chairs in the front row.

But we must leave this village now,  
saying *adiós* to the teacher & the  
*alumnos*, to *abuelos* & farmers. We wind  
down the *sierra*, past rain-damp fields  
& forests of coffee, towards Sanare. A  
herd of cows blocks the road, a  
calf trying to suckle his mother's teats.

## Evening's Tide

The broad beach has disappeared  
    beneath the rising tide  
Faint rose tints the scattering  
    clouds of this sunset

& as blackness settles  
    with the song of some  
        night bird, frogs & a gecko  
the fiercer waves climb the steps  
    of the long-gone promenade  
        leaping, splashing  
against that rubble  
    white rip currents pulling  
        into the high ocean

& the lights of distant villages  
    speckle the far horizon

## LEAVING BEHIND

I leave behind  
    mothers bathing their  
    naked daughters  
    in a growing tidal pool

& follow a narrowing path

through mangrove brambles  
escaping far from people

I sit on this deserted beach  
the porpoise-colored sea  
rolling its rising tide  
against the black rock ...

shaking off troubling thoughts  
to be captured  
by this surf,  
washed far, far away

& the my Spirit take wing  
like that *piquero*  
soaring over the waters  
swooping & diving ...

to be like that sea  
lion pup, playfully  
plunging beneath, bobbing  
with each roll of this sea

## **Towards The River Plate** (Montevideo)

Paper & leaves scuttle down cavernous Saturday streets,  
few souls out in these depths.  
A woman holds the reins of a horse-drawn cart,  
her children staring into the closing morn.  
Limp bags of cardboard & bottles hang off the sides.

Along Sarandi Street, artisan stalls of puppets,  
stones & carved gourds, honey & fruit preserves  
in the cool shade of worn buildings.  
A silver-haired man plays violin,  
his sightless eyes closed.  
Case open at his feet, scattered with coins.

Suddenly the rhythm of drums echoes up this way  
from the Plaza Constitución.  
Three boys with blue & yellow *tambores*,  
a friend with hat in hand,

followed by a policeman herding them away  
from the antique sellers beneath trees,  
away from the couples dancing folklore,  
gaucho & tango in front of the *cabildo*,  
away from the diners in sidewalk cafés.

Up the *calle* along the Central Market & Mundo Afro,  
beats of a *comparsa* resonate      resonate.  
Dark hands caress the skins while the other  
grips a stick rapping      rapping,  
painted stars bobbing on the red & black drums.

Beyond, the River Plate flows,  
bands of muddy brown, dull green,  
tarnished blue in the past-noon sun.  
Down along the Rambla,  
men sit sipping mate,  
thermos tucked under arm.  
Families swim along the sparse-sand beach,  
bask upon wave-smooth rocks.

Up on the Cubo del Sur,  
children pose upon a rusted cannon  
for *papá's* photo.  
A man slits the silvered belly of a fish.  
Long black rod in hand,  
white cap shading his eyes & balding head,  
he baits his line.

& far on the horizon,  
in the haze of sun & sea,  
slow ships steam to other ports.

**Lorraine Caputo** is a wandering troubadour whose poetry appears in over 300 journals on six continents, and 20 collections of poetry – including *Notes from the Patagonia* (dancing girl press, 2017), *On Galápagos Shores* (dancing girl press, 2019) and *Caribbean Interludes* (Origami Poems Project, 2022). She also authors travel narratives, articles and guidebooks. Her writing has been honored by the Parliamentary Poet Laureate of Canada (2011) and nominated for the Best of the Net. Caputo has done literary readings from Alaska to the Patagonia. She journeys through Latin America with her faithful knapsack Rocinante, listening to the voices of the *pueblos* and Earth. Follow her adventures