

One hundred streets

(A poem for New York)

A dagger into the sky:
the market of words.
A royal time to sigh,
inwards and outwards.

Inside beauty,
outside truth.
Do I trust pity
or the reader's ruth?

If your eyes are ready
for my words to soothe...
Be sure I will not exchange
My caring for another range.

So I tell you with no delay
why I write to you in this day.
Tenebra kept me here,
a hurricane's breath!
On lanes of knocking fear
of the future and its path.

As many libraries as many seats:
I shall tell about yourself.
New York, oh amazing streets!
Of concrete sod and aerial delph.
In the world all the other cities
Just clap before your spells.

A little torch and gift from Paris
And 'tis boat-sailing May and flowers
brought liberty of sprinkling fairies,
they grew the instep of the hours!

Statues upon my back looking
for what I treasured to write:
the gold of my brown pen booking
a place to dress from paperwhite.

To guard the world at healing...
For rush not to crash it apart!
So I hold your constellation of feelings
I find your frontispieces of art.
Rise up, New York, the trimmings
of all dreams embedded in your chart!

But bleak is the safe borough,
People in masks, yet no disguise:
escaping from pain and sorrow,
and strolling for bravery's prize.

Where's the white noise of your busy jams?
I can hear the doors in buildings, when they slam...
And a sweet song of the rustle of leaves
in trees, of water fountains, of red lifts.
Everything sleepy when it grieves...
From morning to night, opinion shifts.

First alley tells me of human beings:
each one a circled fragile life.
But the second, of humanity's wing:
indestructible, for made of strife.

The earnest endeavor of a caring people
is on the third block of my next strain.
The folk to and fro as sepals
but something from them remains:
the name of this wondrous Big Apple,
where they loved, smiled and waned.

Yes, a fruit and a fine: out from paradise.
But now your sanguine pome curb such fee,

discovered a splendid surprise:
New York docile and gentle, eager to see...

Its own illuminated glass of skyscrapers,
the fresh treads in a porch made as shelter,
a view of the moon-floating the skyline and its song;
framed by arabesques, the entrances where one belongs.

The sturdy stone of the edifices in Madison
proves the existence of many brethren:
to raise them a force with no comparison,
but also sensibility not to break them.
But then I stroll back to Park Avenue

so I can take some Lexington coffee,
until I can reach a week of tenure,
I learn about your geography.
The Fifth greets me with pink blossoms,
it shows me cameos over 100 years
on the walls explaining their bosoms
and how zigurats didn't disappear.

Broadway interrupts my song:
it tells me ironically this poem is too long.
But my feet are fond of meeting the challenge:
and at Sixth I stop in Bryant's cenotaph henge.
In perpendiculars I'm followed by a new friend:
a greyish blue and fat and chatty fairywren.

We see buildings molting their covers,
overhauls from the First until the Seventh.
They seized when days were over,
and closed for minstrels in search of leaven.

And then a glance on each street shortcut
to the golden lean of an autumn park.
I promised a verse on each, but
until 110th, streets repeat the same arc...

They reiterate the achievement of their schedules.
Oh, the hard life! But how to criticize straight venues?
I greeted from 59th two noble horsemen,
and marriages turned carriages every now and then.

Your trees curled in amber, but also evergreener than before!
Flaxen shrubs in braided paths, ah, the poet's ore...
The Met, Guggenheim, and the city's old Museum
are having a break until our next year's carpe diem...

The Conservatory Garden: the paragon of the United States.
Man teaching mother nature how to grow and cheer our fates.
Over Harlem I catch a dolmen of jazz,
three bridges sloping the horizon over one another.
Blossoms along Central Park much as
the rays of light falling aslant this mother.

In my way back after the lake without swanns
I find the frames of your trees around a tunnel:
boughs, and their fruits, and falling leaves all set upon;
across the ave, rhombus windowpanes with hummels.

And then I found Central Park West inmates:
behind them golden, old, and secret doors
and after them golden, old, and secret gates
the shrine of their safe plaid floors...

Vessels of York roses engraved in stone
vases of true posies: in cold they're gone.
Only New Yorkers here and there circulating
as if they took vacations of the world's ratings.

Wait! I hear at the end of the portentous green rectangle
a sudden call of my shepherd's reed.
From protesters, an early blockade of NYPD.
For them a good day I greet, from all these angles.

And then I go down midtown, on 34th
to buy me at Macy's a fair pair of shoes.
Until 58th I continue and there's reward:
and lose my time to find a fair amuse.

In Herald Plaza a boardwalk for rapid bikes
Two owls, Athena, a bell waking up her sake...
And listen! A morning tune in the accordion pleat!
October postponed its joy to the next month,
As before so on, other months' same plead...
Polyptych in windows of my Pontic pons.

It sings of silent times, of the end of his street
few cars, few moves, few gents, few florists.
The heart expecting those they will not meet:
the cheerful faces of vanished tourists.

Roofless people are so charming in New York!
Hard to know how they lost what to wait for.
Wait, coming disparagement in someone without posture,
the entrance of freight, disgrace, and moisture:
a scream of an unknown woman! Alas! Foulness!
Oh dear, and my flight, my home, in aweness...

The hurricane Eta took away a famous Hondurean bridge
the airport flooded by rivers and sea, all flooded but the ridge...
And still the virus at which a third of people snore
advances ceaselessly on graves with no bore.

I search the safe spots while I wait for it to pass.
My flight is there postponed, but kept, at last.
And then a nostalgia, for I remember
the first time I saw you: a postcard from any sender...
A pilot who flew with me, as passenger, his tender
to fly Rio-New York, and he enjoyed so much our talk
he said he would send me a card, from a Manhattan walk.

So in my wait of memories I search for beauty in the bights,

but suddenly so deep is the gloam of this night...
I remember my childhood, and my children, the same plight.
On lower Manhattan, there I drive as my body decrees
also women in half-dresses searching for bachelor's degrees...

And where is love in this city of much desire?
He gaits towards me! But he doesn't see the wire
holding all things, paralysing urban layers
alone he made my heart shoot fast in many prayers.

A man my age, my culture, with gulf clubs in a-a-a bag
happily wandering his way back home, I blush not to flag.
I'm in mask, pants, heavy coat: and I do not beg...
Love is gone. A motley crew quickly moving, love withdrawn.

Citizens on the 5th, discouraged and worried about elections...
Still some find a musical trio to play confections
at Dante Caffè, near Washington Plaza's affections.
But I'm loyal to the one love that didn't notice me:
all night I'll dream of him, in debt and doubt if I'm free...

But my smile by a rider is promptly recovered:
a silk scarf of deer stamp, enshrouding his face, louvered...
New York...! A mask-scandal riding cheerfully...
Did you know about my passion for your indifference to harmony?

And does your heart beat blood to other towns?
Does your pulse make live and breathe the dew in dawn
of New Haven, Hartford, Houston;
In Harrisburg, Atlanta, Boston...
All states counting votes and faces of who lost them.

The outward cant of your vanishing points
to Paris, and Tokyo, and Rio, and Rome,
and London, and Berlin, all universal joints;
in streets some say reverted the poor life inside a dome.

Oh night! Now turned light as flying feathers

falling from the firs on my sight, on my shoes of leather.
New Yorkers spelling on white wood Italian tables
a hum from the mountain, a birth of middle-earth fables...

The brick lintels, door jambs, and masonry portals
assure me your personality is a tenet: immortal.
From the pride of those who built a dreaming place
where we find the perfect dress, the fitting deed, the finest case...
Where streets are safe for a poet to sing every grace.

Aye! I feel the touch of a satisfying tooth on this paper,
the smell of virgin sheets I kindly asked the stationers...
Sparks glisten in the prism of gemstones on my gown:
they move the lines I am writing in you, alone.

The eternal and moving city of Rabbis Schneersons...
They offer me goodness, company, a picture of wisdom.
Back to the Public Library: beauty and truth's kingdom.
And I come through a 41st St. of wit inscribed in gold:
for someone laid bevels of best quotes, on sidewalk's road.
But time to fly away from you, the time of toil's load...

In my way a huge hare and a cunning dog having tea:
at the hall of modern businesses plaza on 46th S-t.
Hail to the final scene! Manhattan reflecting over the water
a casting shine I sailed with my sons and my daughter.

New York, you'll never know how magical you are!
Monochrome from the light bulb of the scions and same stars...
The Hudson makes you no mirror,
East River doesn't keep your steam
'cause so far and so beautiful is the memory of my esteem...

You could never remember how we laughed, amused, and cried
in movies and adventures of our childhood's screen delight.
When days were warm and sugared,
for your ghosts coming out from manholes covered,
for a kid forgotten by parents who didn't push over,

heroes fighting monsters for you not to be over...
Love stories reaping tears for a happy end uncovered.

Chinese, Iranian, Ukrainian, Venezuelan, and me, Brazilian
we see beyond each other, for this same care we are the stillions.

But you... You will never know how much one can loves you!
Because you have never seen yourself in sudden blue
for finding you in an old postcard I once wished true.
You're in disdress for now, but I'm sure you knew
this song was coming, our encounter the ages through.