

THURSDAY THE RIVER

Jorge, (me dijo) Brother, "I'll give you a ride." Flat tire. Traffic flying. The lugs are stuck. Damn brother that was fast. Picked Rudy up. "What's up, Chicago, que paso?" The brother needs a blessing. Wait, I forgot my tobacco and medicine bag. The sun was an 8:00 o'clock. Along the river in San Antonio. The cleansing began. I feel the energy from the sun, the air smells so clean. Yet I feel no peace. We chant to the Guadalupe, Our Mother, Sister, Daughter. " Jorge raps to her. He says, "Roman say something " "Guadalupe, Mother, Sister, Daughter." " I, Roman ask for a little strength to face the fate that awaits me." " I know this man who stands before you are unworthy of your love." "I, who have denied your embrace of peace and love." " I, who have lived the life through clouded dreams." " I ask only a small hand to help me through this period of confusion." "Yes, I will return the favor, my Mother, my Sister, my Daughter." " This man has been humbled." " Guadalupe, if in your heart, your hand be held out." "I will hold it in my heart forever." "Thank you, my brothers, thank you mi Lupe." We drive, we talk, we head for the greyhound to catch a bus to Austin. I sit here in the station just writing my thoughts. I still feel sad and lonely yet for some reason, I feel a sense of hope. I do not know why, yet the feeling is there. I have no answer for the last two weeks. I am still in a sort of daze. I mean, WOW, I had a home, a family, a wife. Now, I have not slept in the same place twice. It's like I'm racing my mind during the day. It looks like I'm winning the race, yet at night I lose. Yes, my nights are the hardest to deal with. I do not know, I just can't sleep. And when I do, the dreams start. They are so real, it is like I think I am sleeping, yet I'm awake in my mind. So, I don't know if I'm asleep or awake. Weird huh? Well the 10:30 bus will be going soon; it will get to Austin at 12:00. I have an appointment with the VA. But they are full of shit. Interesting the thoughts that a man goes through. The bus station is slowly filling up with people. Some going south, some north. Me, I am looking for me.

Roman

THE SLAUGHTERHOUSE- EL ROSTRO

Tomorrow Luis will make his first communion. So Jose and Delia are planning a party, so we drove to Santo Jose asked if I had ever been to a ROSTRO house " no not really I say but I know I have never been to one yet Macho men never say never I could have just said no and waited outside but no, not me. So here I am standing at the door to the ROSTRO man, before you walk in first thing your nose gets is a friendly welcome man, the smell is a combination of blood, shit, and fear, what you see when you walk in is two rows, left and right with animals skinned or being skinned. Whole cows just hanging there on hooks, they tell me and Jose to come look at the side of the cow but there is too much blood and shit for me to walk in there. So I watched Jose go in the back and choose one then they come back with a calf it's black with white marks in its head and black legs.

They lead it out by its tail's poor little thing- it's eyes are freaking out I know he's crying for help yet I watch as the sacrificial knife slices it's throat. God, what a cruel world we live in, but for life is that way for one to live one must die. As I watch it kick for the last time. Yet which is crueler, this pinche life or the forever sleep of the calf? Death was it's only hope as it ran down the sewer. All this I smelled and watched death for them was peace then my eyes catch this little kid with a bucket what he was doing was picking up the scraps of meat and tripe from the floor as he picks up the little scraps of meat... For to him this is his life and death. Yet, one day we must look through his eyes to see ourselves two sheep take their turn on the one-way ride to forever sleep. Funny, death has no fear for me...

Roman

La Curandera Mary Th.

The day started overcast and cloudy talk to my sister and me in the early morning but what interests me was when we talked about a woman named Yerberia Mary Th.

This being a rarity in this business because she was for real she actually feels for her clients my sister recommended her highly

To me this new for I have stopped believing many moons ago in a higher being death has crossed my path so many times I feel it's bony hands clutching at my soul leaving a man hollow like a maze with no exit the heat from the 12 sun felt good as I entered her shop yes me the number livre in search of the answers that only my dreams asked for only in the dreams was the war raging like the Norte on a Southwest Texas day what a place it was made of wood and was divided into two rooms the first room was where rows and rows of potions love powder money and hate the feeling of something with the tinge of the unknown and the power of good floated in the air.

Yes I felt what am I doing here do you really want to know the answer that you already know

Mary Th. Enters the room first she washed her hands in holy water welcomes me in as I sit and look across the face of the woman who has heard the sounds of misery despair and hate and the voices of thousands of souls yet she sits day in and day out with compassion to give wisdom to give strength to her children when their souls cry out she is this person this Curandera, this woman Mary Th.

who I sit before and tell a tale of a man who dance in the clouds who washed his soul in the rainbow that only the artist of the earth sea yet when she said tu esposa when she made love was it sex or love when you hear her with passion and feeling or is it because she was there you must understand if you still hold that seed in your hand you must plant it again for you must begin from the beginning for only there will you see that flower that wants Bloom and nourish In The garden of Life but you must be true to your soul and ask the question that you seek I tell you as a woman go find that flower again place it in your heart for only if your heart is true I stand and look at this woman Mary Th and I see in her eyes that she was sharing her wisdom and strength to this man who I stand before her and I ask why don't chase the wind let it take you back home for their and only there is the key so spoke to a woman the curandera Mary Th. For a man's curse is to choose which road he will take.

Learned

It's funny how I learned it's not easy to learn in this journey I learned to see with my heart and not through my eyes to listen with my mind and not with my ears to touch with my soul and not my hands and some will never learn I learned I must get old to understand why the rain must come I learned females lust for Life women live it but of all I've learned I've learned too late

Places of Interest

Tampico's famous triangle this is sort of where you find Tampico at its most decadent and I mean worse from prostitutes and every corner guys everywhere you wouldn't believe what you'll see to get there you walked towards the waterfront and away from the center of the city it's in one of the oldest sections of Tampico lots of old buildings most in a state of decay so it's perfect for this kind of action prostitutes do their thing in these run down places it's so dark and Mexican the police turn their faces and see nothing but this is Mexico at its worse faggots do their thing right in the open there are 60,000 cases of AIDS reported in thumb Pico man that's crazy for such a small place it will scare anyone with sense so what do I do you guessed it I walked the triangle one Friday night to see for myself to see how far man can take himself what I saw that night is like a nightmare of the worst kind people get robbed every night beatings and muggings men you named it it's there so what am I doing there I am testing fate not really I just had to see for myself you know curiosity killed the cat so I walk the decadent Street of the triangle late one night it's like I have to see the world from all levels of society as I passed the prostitutes the bags in their night world they stared at me like I stared at them for I am not of their world yet their silence is Erie and stairs are piercing who dares walk or decadent streets as I stared back at them with no fear in my heart yet I pity those lost souls of the night for they know no other life than this then I think to myself in the beginning of this journey how I felt I thought man I cannot get no worse than this how wrong I was the world out there is so vicious and cruel me all I was running from was a broken heart till I saw the broken souls of the triangle so far I must have seen everything Mexico has to offer yet I am humbled and grateful for when this journey ends I will go home here Mexico stays as it has always been

Strange Things Happen:

Strange smells

early that morning about say 3 a.m. I woke up from a sound sleep not from any noise but from a foul smell and I mean foul it woke me up from a sound sleep the strange perfume was a skunk somehow one lives in the backyard somewhere that night it left a message man did I get the message don't mess with the skunk

Shortage of water

did I mention how short water is I woke up early to use the bathroom after I was sitting there for a while I get up to flush no water bottle drop I think they turn the water off at night so there I am I don't want to wake anyone up for what do I do nothing that's what I do and I hope when the water is turned on I'm the first to flush the toilet why me

Taking a bath

like when you take a bath you turn on the water jump in jump out turn off the water you soap up and shampoo then you turn on the water and rinse off same thing when you shave and brush your teeth In-N-Out you don't waste water some people bathe every two to three days not me I try everyday I'm getting good at this saving water thing don't think about a bubble bath

Bus North

My journey North feels so different from going south To me heading south was like a new book I couldn't wait to open it and read going north is like I know this book I am excited and looking forward to opening this book yet I hesitate to open it South was it book of fiction that is a story it told adventure romance solutions to a new puzzle me I can't wait for book two but that's another story.

In this book my feet walked the Rocky land of Michoacan

These feet climbed la Sierra+ walked the canyons deep in the center of Mexico's heartland. Tierra del campesino. Can't get more Mexico than that I just made it I almost became a Higuera tree one More Moon and I wouldn't be able to leave my roots would have started again a long story my feet Dodged just in time Tampico felt my feet on its golf and its streets Tampico must have felt my vibe for the sun hit three days and took the moon with him El senor del person almost felt them but we turned around get down James Brown these feet walk through Mexico's ozone down the triangle and up boys Town before my abuela while she bless me forever feet who stumbled home too latitude take your boots off just as the bus started moving man that feels good huastequism strange and mysterious as you are I'll accept your hand in this ancient dance and drink your honey water from the old gods feet who stopped were the godfathers spread the seeds of Life did humble before the higuera tree of Mexico carve the stone of the ancient ones painted the colors of Mexico V on the Rock Coral full of cow shit search for Mexico in the face only I saw but the only Mexican face I see is me guess I looked out the window of the bus too long now the bus heads North with each mile I lose to the South the new story begins

Boy's Town: Reynosa, Mexico

boys town no I have never been to a boy's Town while we were close we wanted to see one sure if it's not out of the way no it's only around the corner I tell you I haven't had a good laugh in a long time but you have to check this out just imagine a yellow taxi we were right behind it when first one dude and another and another do 12 guys got out of one taxi man that was something to see well you paid 3 pesos to go in first thing the dudes who work there try to steer you to their club clubs like the pussycat Las Vegas that's the first thing you see the strip clubs must be about a dozen they all look kind of the same seedy and rough but it still has this aura of decadence sin and fun funny words from a man like me so we turn the corner and man unbelievable you see these women standing in front of I guess their rooms for all I see is a bed maybe a radio or something who knows I've just seen them from the street oh yeah we were in a car so I didn't actually walk around but it looks so surreal that it's hard to describe like a very bad dream only you never wake up these women all young middle age most wore very little clothing most were wearing Frederick's of Hollywood nightwear these women they told me we're at the bottom of the totem it's hard to believe there was a high and a low and in this business the ones in these rooms are at the bottom if you have 10 Americans you have their soul for that moment but in their faces is a look that a boy who goes to boys Town doesn't not need to see or want to suffering and Injustice life has given these women for they are someone's mother daughter friend lover yet there they are in all their color the suffering souls of night the ones in the club are younger but their fate is to be at the bottom I want to get out of the car and walk in this decadence to stroll the streets of the ones God's lost to the night what am I looking for sex drugs and rock and roll none of the above I just want to walk the streets of lost souls and look into their eyes for I feel no desire to be a boy in boys town for I walk in this place a man men don't walk the streets of boys town yet at this point in my life I feel their misery and their despair for I to walk alone in the night funny a man must walk many roads in life get tonight I walk at the bottom for only at the bottom can you see over the clouds Reynosa Mexico you have placed a memory in my mind like I see that will always be there for in your streets of misery a man walked alone and found the courage to walk that chile relleños son night in boys town

The Baile

Last night as we cross into Reynosa Mexico in my mind I was acting all tough and macho I'll show them s*** you don't mess with me I'll walk in and dance the night away with all the pretty young girls and they were their young slim everything a man would want yet the word I keep using is Young who am I fooling you are close to 50 just stepping out of a 28-year mystery yet the so-called macho knew nothing of what you are to do so among hundreds of young women I sit alone I look left right I walked all around the place up down stood in the corner went up to the stage everyone was having a great time but this man from the city walked alone let me see I know quiere bailar simple huh so I spent the night searching looking for a fool's dream I know I'll ask her know her the body heat from the dancefloor floated hot in the air the base thumped so loud it went right through you Los trelleros y Los ambassadors del Norte jammed the night away as I stood there watching I realized I was once one of these dancing happy young couples I was 3 in the AM me that macho Man had to walk all that yang as we walked out of this place that Reynosa night I wonder will I ever dance the dance of life for he who wants dance now becomes a tree who watches the world in that chili rellelena night

El Señor

Last night we sat around and talked about the history of Cojumatlan and how they lost or sold it a great story

We also talked about the tunnels that lead to the church from outside the Mexican army once around at the church and will not let them in so they build tunnels to their Church here they believe for real we went to the Church of El Señor De perdon he is 400 year old he's made of wood and he's something to see well I was here they took him down and parade him around the town must have been over a thousand people or more it was something to see I felt like praying to him in his church

But I'm no hypocrite I know all I would ask for is selfish for he does not have to hear my plea but it was tempting to ask him for help it's a lot for me not to gripe but I respect him a lot if one day this is about the looks or salvation I will go to him if God wills it damn did I say that I must be changing his church draws me to it for some strange reason maybe it's because for he who forgives might even forgive me but for what I don't know it's just a good feeling now I know what my lost flower found in church I felt this peace what a fool I have been the church does not ask questions only a man's mind ask the stupid questions for a Señor del perdon only forgives but do we forgive ourselves for our past sins I myself don't know I know I felt something but if the winds blow me in this direction again this vato from the bush will kneel before is alter and ask him for forgiveness life how strange you are you close my eyes you fill them with tears then you made me open them again to see what I haven't seen in years la vida or hear la vida is the most basic for here is has been a zit has always been in the land of the campesino beans and tortillas the food of life hello alright okay thanks yet this vato has to come all the way to understand simplicity is life now I understand but what a price I paid to learn this lesson yet El señor forgives me

The Higuera Tree

Now this is a tree me I have only seen them here but they are only coming in Mexico but this tree is for real nothing I mean nothing stops it from growing like the one I drew from my study now this is one here has a huge hole right in the middle of its trunk most trees would have fallen over dead but not this tree I've seen one with a boulder right in the middle of its trunk it grew right around it the tree in my study somehow lost all its middle it looks like a funny door then on the other side it looks like someone or lightning caused it to burn by alright it should be dead this tree is amazing that's why it caught my interest Mother nature at its best

I'll always remember this tree it's like everything I've seen and done will remain with me forever as an artist who could ask for more I have so much inspiration to last me a while it's hard to believe I'm even out here for even in my wildest dreams this is wild the marvel here is just great to work and cheap there is so much here for an artist besides life I've only been here two weeks and I have one marble sculptures three paintings 10 or more sketches and ideas I see them everywhere this would be for me one of my best times I've had in a long time yet what a funny word yet what yet that's what I don't know I say goodbye to sura today took him to the airport and Walla Hara to catch his flight to Mexico City then on to the Windy City he should be home about I say 7 or 8 we said at 10 that night to look at the Moon until those two Amigo's who share the same Moon that in different worlds salud my friend Chicago you haven't crossed my mind in a while I haven't forgotten you it's just you know I need to be in the wind for a while I didn't know my destiny would bring me to the altar of this beautiful tree the higuera if I was to pick a tree you guessed it a higuera he exactly what I feel like that no matter what this Bean chair life does to me I get stronger with every moment I come every day to this tree and sit and its shadow and wish this tree was in my yard but is it in the world is now my yard I just haven't looked at it lately my fault now I can't get enough of all this vagabondo life it's like a drug that once gets in your system only the road and the curiosity of what's around the next bend in the road the people the new smells la vida what a trip you are time I have no time I just do what whatever the hell I want so me what do I do I stand before the higuera tree and dream the dreams of a dreamer what it would be like to travel for a year from one end of Mexico to another what to do first time in a long time I've wanted to do something I just want to jump in the wind and fill my books with life then paint and sculpt to my heart's content for that is heaven to a dreamer but he too must share his dream so he writes to whomever will read the travel of this vato from the Bush yet who knows la vida it let the higuera grow in the land of the big rock strong and powerful you never know

Guamuchel

Another interesting fruit was In Bloom while I was here the guamuchel
The guamuchel is very common in this area but it is tastefully good but the
day after for some reason your breath funk from this fruit don't blow a silent
but deadly man you're clear the room and I mean fast I think it's fragrance
is in your panza or something but the people here love them I see them out
picking them in the early evening what a price but this is Mexico what's a
little smell when your panza is full between me and you I'm glad it stayed
there the guamuchel whoof

Abuela

May 14th been in Tampico for 5 days the morning finds me and my abuela sitting together we don't say very much to each other but this moment I wouldn't trade it for anything in the world this little lady who is the center of everyone's heart she is what holds the family together as she sits in her wheelchair for she can no longer see it somehow she knows all her children and grandchildren either by touch smell yet she knows who you are like when I first got here I went up to her and held her as she touched my face with her small delicate hand she pulls me toward her and she says Roman mi hijoas a little tear of Joy came to her I she held me in her arms she hug me to her I felt a string in this little woman I felt like I could be here forever she has enough love in her little frail body the life took her sight she now sees with her spirit to see her surrounded by pure love as all her children protect her for she is the center of all we sit around her at night as see her little face shine with joy and happiness Burger Life is us for children makes me think will I ever feel this life my abuela has today is so pleasant to me as I helped her eat some candy made of coconut and I just called her hands and see the piece of one who has always been our grandmother we are the children of Petra San Martin Ramirez as I look at her this may morning knowing I must say goodbye to her for this journey must continue for my destiny is in the hands of fate in my heart I know this will be the last time I hold her in my arms and stroke her hair silver where the old gods will come soon for her this little woman who is the center of our hearts yet we must not be selfish they need her to the little woman we call abuela e mama yet as a little tear comes to my eyes as I hold her yes she felt it as she said Mijo Vaya con dios so she gave her blessing to her vagabondo who came must go with the wind as it is called andole vatos vamanos sadness and pride for she is my abuela I must continue this journey destiny has given me I know I take her with me for she gave us a little piece of herself to survive this world of madness for in her circle we all found peace for she is the tree and we are the lives of this beautiful tree in Tampico we call abuela May the old god's love you always for we always will

Cojumatlan: When the Moon Hid

Stepped off the bus late that night when the moon hit her smile
The Shadow word
darker than dark as it crept into town staying in the shadows like the ghost it was for it
was the night are the Walk The Rock Street of Cojumatlan
Not a soul saw it has it walked yet everyone saw it as a boldly walked on the streets that
night of no light for the moon was tired that night, so he searched for the night

Nita

The rooster did a 6 o'clock as I woke up from a deep nod you came to my mind early as I drank my first cup of coffee did I pick up a lot of new habits like coffee cigarettes riding the bus to nowhere I just like to be moving south is where my mind wants to be North is my destiny still remember the day you crossed my path that Golden child you were first time I held you was forever and your little eyes I saw the future this vato just out of the Name thing when I came for the both of you to share my destiny no dude walked the body or more proud than me In Your eyes you saw your father in my arms I held a daughter life took us down many roads some rough some smooth but we walk together till life in all its fury and hate close the door but you stayed on one side me on the other I spent a lifetime looking for that key yet the key was in your heart I spent a lifetime knocking on a closed-door called life ice cream my little girl is on the other side I'll accept the woman this woman I knew her as she handed me three loves wait let me look in that door I knew my baby girl is still there but the room was too dark so I saw nothing Christmas let me see my little girl again but only for a moment I wanted to hold your hurt in my heart for you have held it too long me I'm getting older and it's my time to hurt I hurt when you hurt I cry when you cry I laugh when life lets me life made a left turn on me so fast it knocked me down and just missed a deep hole called depression that's a hard one to climb Auto yet your hand held me from falling all the way we walk we cried together I flew into the clouds and the clouds my little golden baby never left as I held your memory in my heart where it has always been the past is our door leave it closed walk on the 8th into the sun of life and see our little flowers grow and Bloom in the sunlight of Love & Faith fate was not fair to us but it made us stronger you are your father's daughter when life knocks you down you get up but it won't knock us down twice will you learn fast but you have what you will always have my love forever

Not A Coyote

The phone rang that morning Mike and me were just coolin out after doing some Bo we were just bullshittin he was into canvases and I was catching up on my writing and deciding what I was going into my first job ROM I think it's for you me dude not me yeah come on hello Rome hello Rome hello who is this Rome is that you oh I'm sorry is everything all right all my alarms are going off something has happened at home I hear her crying are you okay now I'm starting to freak out what's going on I just needed to talk to you I just had a car accident I didn't know who to call are you all right I'm sorry for not recognizing your voice I just needed to talk to you I don't like feeling like this I know I know your much stronger it's okay don't cry you know I'm coming home Saturday yeah I know Rome know it's alright we'll talk about it another time when you feel up to it then I realized I am talking to you and I have nothing to say I felt speechless or was it the BS Fuck it who knows the sound of your voice does to me what nothing on Earth can do I think it took two months just to get pass part 1 and your tears dissolve it like acid in seconds now you're back on my mind again but like all animals that life has kicked in the head like a coyote who smells a trap but is too hungry to care so instinct takes over I circle the trap smelling looking for something I run run my instincts yell yet I stand there looking at the tears and the traps are all like a magnet I turn and look at the moon for help I yelled to the Wynn please tell me what the wind is sign it as the stars are you okay yes I'm better I'm going to wash my face and go to the police station and file an accident report how have you been me I guess I'm fine I will see you at Nita's party sure I guess sure you're okay I don't want to get hurt or anything I just scared okay I'm going to hang up now I guess I'll see you Saturday at Nita's run run vato bye-bye I hold the trap in my hands for a long time. Coyote wants to run south into the mountains man turns North and looks into the horizon and destiny ese what's wrong with you as I hang up the phone did you know that Cervantes was in prison in the 16 century turkey for 6 years how they cut his feet so he could not escape Cervantes what oh yeah Cervantes you alright yeah I guess please don't let me become a coyote coyote trust none that even another coyote the world is a trap waiting to hurt him every scrap of food is a scrap every sign of affliction is a kick Love is the moon and the wind they ask nothing the Moon shows you're the night wind brings you smells like a coyote alone is a coyote as I stare at the phone what's that Mike Cervantes know I didn't know that I stared at the phone ring ring ring