

Kuwanlelenta- To make beautiful surroundings...

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Even when I was very poor as
a child of eight, when I finally
went to the store to steal
food for my grandmother and

me, curling my hands into fists,
to fight, I always brought
back a small flower for her
altar, and we'd laugh as we

ate the stolen Spam, bread,
jam, milk. My grandmother's altars
were always beautiful, finding small
stones, seashells, flowers on

the way, her favorite red roses,
so when I found a flowering bush
I picked four quickly, bleeding from
shy thorns, she praised me for

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Villanueva, A. "*Kuwanlelenta-* To make beautiful surroundings..." *Camino Real. Estudios de las Hispanidades Norteamericanas*. Alcalá de Henares: Instituto Franklin- UAH, 1:2, (2010): 145-146.

their beauty- and when I
lived with my children, we always
had flowers at the center of
our table, as well as food,

the poetry my grandmother taught
me, the beauty of red roses,
the beauty of singing words,
she taught me always

to create beauty as
I go, and if you
bleed, don't cry,
laugh, at the sheer

luck of finding
perfect red roses
for free, watch
beauty

disappearing over
flowers, *Siyamtiwa*,
it will return soon, kissing
your open hand.

**Siyamtiwa*- Object disappearing over flowers...

Alma Luz Villanueva
San Miguel de Allende, Mexico- October 2009

RED ROSES, 6:30 in the evening

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The first bull, Mexican
matador, the overweight
lancers on horseback
pierce el toro's spinal

column deeply, over
and over, taking his strength,
his power, bringing him to
his knees after two half

hearted passes with the
cape, just wanting to
die- TORO TORO
TORO TORO we scream,

enraged by this cowardice of
lancers, simpering matador-
MATALO we yell,
KILL HIM, el

toro on his knees
begging for death- an older
man yells to the young, Mexican

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matador, "Sin pasión te haces viejo...
Without passion, you become old!"
We BOOOO the coward, his
dragging red cape, out
of the ring, the circle

where death came as
sword, metal, thrust,
el toro suffering, bleeding,
families of the poor will

eat tonight, the best cuts for the
rich. The second bull claims the
ring, chasing junior bullfighters with
fuchsia capes behind wooden

barricades, full of power, death
laughing at the tips of his twin
horns- the smug lancers enter,
lances poised to take his

power, we go wild
BOOOO BOOOO
Only one superficial thrust,
someone signals as we

BOOOOOOOOO
confused, they leave the
circle as we stand to
cheer TORO TORO TORO

The Spaniard strolls in with power
and grace, his red cape held at hip
level, he faces el toro, an equal, respect
in his bearing, and they begin to

dance, and they begin to dance
 an ancient dance of hunter/prey,
 prey/hunter, death to death, and
 in the last light, the great sun

showers light and shadow equally,
 the circle where they dance, toro,
 matador, death joins this graceful
 dance of equals, twin

horns skimming the Spaniard's
 slim body, so intimately,
 death is his lover, his
 mother, those powerful twin

horns, and el toro
 knows this, we can
 see that he knows
 this, as he gives himself

(his immense strength,
 power) to the dance of
 equals, each one could
 die, yet each one dances

so gracefully, so intimately,
 horn to hip, horn to groin,
 sword in hand, sweeping
 the red cape, human and

bull breathe the same
 sky, feel the fading sun's
 light, shadow of moon,
 equally, they dance

as we shout OLE
endlessly, they dance,
equals in death, in
love, they dance. The

Spaniard rises on his
tip-toes, every muscle
visible, tense, his suit
of lights sparkling at

6:30 in the evening, sword
drawn, ready, as his lover
passes so intimately, twin
horns caressing his thighs,

el toro passes beautifully, dancing,
death finds him dancing,
swift death, no suffering,
dancing- his lover's tender

ear in his raised hand, he
circles the ring, holding it
tenderly, not a prize, tenderly,
someone throws him una bota de

vino, he gulps as the crowd
counts UNO DOS TRES
to twelve, he drinks at 6:30
in the evening, smiling,

shouting GRACIAS as the
moon swallows the circle,
as el toro is butchered for
hunger. I want to

dance with my death
 gracefully, equally, at
 6:30 in the evening, the
 hour of my birth, as

Venus rises spilling her
 erotic light, vowing to
 meet the great Sun at
 dawn, facing Moon and

shadow, I want to dance
 with el toro, my lover, so
 intimately, human, bull,
 light, dark, life, death,

those twin horns, swiftly.
 Next time I'll bring red
 roses for the circle, if
 such a dance is danced-

or I will scatter them as
 I walk, petal by petal by
 blood-red-petal,
 these roses

are to honor
 light and shadow,
 bull and human,
 the dance, equally,

at 6:30
 in the
 evening, as
 Venus rises

spilling her
erotic light
on us all
equally.

To the Spaniard, Antonio Gaspar-
San Miguel de Allende, Mexico
December 31, 2007

Alma Luz Villanueva