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Pepe Mendez Llarosa

Infrarrealismo

My name is Pepe Mendez Llarosa. I told them. To my friends, I am Pepito. Soy Mexicano. From this great and dirty ciudad that was once Tenochtitlan. And now has become the place where dusty midnight cats dance along the chipped and broken pave-ments through which the sooty jewels - Forever stained by those emerald waters of Texcoco - push up and glimmer in the lamp-lit labyrinths, the very same ones crossed by today's tired and hungry youths who listen to cassettes and whistle their resemblances, their own words of astonishment and rage.

At first, it was my mind that they wanted, that they watched - Like an hourglass about to expire. A bitter mind. Not one they understood too well. 'Madness', they told me. They nodded. 'Madness', they told themselves. But the difference, I told them, be-tween and a madman and I is that I am not mad. But sad! Sad about this boundless ocean of emptiness, I foresee, where all that is left is greed and the endless self perpetuating hate for which we shall all be responsible.

They sneered. Then straightening up, one said, 'Cuenteme un poco de usted, Pepe'. He said, 'Tell me about this sadness of yours and how it came to be'. He leant back into the big, green armchair and I could see the hundred and one adulteries behind these thick windows of his glasses.

I was a lonely teenager, I began. Like most I fantasised, romanticised too much. I never saw what was around me.

And this is true. At night, I would sit in my father's office at his big desk. I would take a cigar from his drawers and read the important French novels. At times I would pause - in vanity - to watch the smoke swirl up under the light's shade.

Or - And more often - I would go to 'Amoureuse', a bar owned by a neat Porteña lady named Silvia. I liked it there. Dependes on how I feel. But most nights I wanted to be here in 'Amoureuse'. I wanted to be anywhere other than Mexico, anything other than Mexicano...

So the truth is I liked to be tucked away tidily from the filth of the centre in this large red room with high ceiling. All around me nicely framed photographs of these old musicians, these writers - the high-classed, civilised