

LIME CURE

I'm filling my house with limes
to keep away the evil spirits.
I'm filling my house with limes
to help me cope.
I have limes on the counters, under the sink,
inside the washbasin.
My refrigerator is stuffed with limes
(there's no longer any space for meat and potatoes).
Faking onionship, they hang from the walls.
Like golf balls, they have the run of the carpet
(but I would not drive them away).

I stash them in flowerpots.
I put them on bookshelves.
I keep them on my desk, cuddling with my computer.
I have two limes in every drawer of every chest
of every room.
I don't bathe, I marinade.

At night, I think of their cores, plump and wet.
I imagine myself taking off the peel and squeezing
until they burst in my hands.
I taste the tart juice dripping on my tongue.
I shudder.
Then I sleep peacefully inside green dreams of lime
and when I wake, I bask in the morning's lime light.

Were it not for limes, I would not know
what to do with myself.
I could not bear this loneliness.
I would burst.
But there is a wisdom in limes, an uneventfulness
that soothes my seething and whispers to me:
think, be still, and think some more,
and when the night arrives, dream of juice.

From *Bilingual Blues. Poems 1981-1994*. Bilingual Press/Editorial Bilingüe, 1995. Also published in *The Americas Review* 20.1 (Spring 1992):38-43, *Decade II: A Twentieth Anniversary Anthology*. Arte Público Press, 1992, *Hispanic American Literature*. HarperCollins, 1995, *Little Havana Blues: A Cuban-American Literature Anthology*. Arte Público Press, 1996 and *The Oxford Book of Caribbean Verse*. Oxford University Press, 2005.