

The Apprehension

The more you heap my hands
 with the claims of love,
Won't it be exposed to more the deceit's depth
 that's within me?
Better for me to pay my piling debts
 and sail away in an empty boat.
Better that I should starve and you withdraw
 your heart filled with nectar
 and go away.

To dull my pain
 I might wake it and you;
To lighten my load
 I might press it to you;
My anguished cry of loneliness well might
 keep you awake at night –
Such are my fears, why I don't speak freely.
 If you can forget,
 please do.

On the lonesome trail I was, when you came along,
 your eyes set on my face.
I thought I'd say, 'Why not come with me?
 say something to me, please!'
But all of a sudden, as I gazed at your face,
 I felt afraid.
I saw a dormant fire's secret smolder
 in the obscure depths
 of your heart's darkest night.

Anchoress, should I suddenly fan
 the flames of your penance into a blazing fire,
Wouldn't that stark light slash all veils asunder
 and lay my poverty bare?
What have I got to offer as sacred fuel
 to your passion's sacrificial fire?
Therefore I say to you with humility:
 with the memory of our meeting
 let me return alone.

(Miralrío, San Isidro, 17 de noviembre de 1924).