

Lemon Jam

*To Martín Espada,
defender of the downtrodden*

Take ripe lemons
with a nice thick rind.
Scrape away the peel of day,
making sure no bitterness remains.

Squeeze from it the juice,
leaving rinds
free of pulp.

Place in fresh water,
changing the water often
in this hot climate.

To make syrup, weigh the day,
add an equal amount of sugar,
and place over a gentle fire.

As with all jams,
once the syrup is just right,
place lemon rinds in it,
cooking the mixture until convinced
it's reached the right consistency.

Thus, each morning
the sun will rise, sweet,
with no bitterness at all,
among the Yanomami huts set ablaze
and tribesman
infected with fatal viruses
by white gods.

*Nicomedes Suárez-Araúz
translated by Steven Ford Brown*

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