

Guanabo Beach, 2005

It was a Wednesday, four destinations.

Nilda would feed us ropa vieja: better than
Miami. Raphael puts on his helmet
or cashes in

his chits for a Lada for a day, we would
drive to Cemeterio Colón.

How a Cuban does this.

Here is a stranger, but familia también
on to the city of dead, having
workshopped en Miramar
and played

beisbol on the Varadero beach
with tennis ball, three bases, one

swig of rum crossing home
with another run.

(ron)

Each shade of blue off the beach
at Varadero, successive
and deeper

hues to the sky

y Matanzas will I ever avoid
Slaughter? Will the
mascara

ancestrales ever adorn the spot
next to Joan's treat, will he ever

see the *brooks of the mountains*

the spot where Rio Guanabo
begins?

She'll tell stories of Mongilo
Fe grills pork chops
at 10:30PM & *Buck*

& *the Preacher* is a lesson
in U.S. history

til the power fails.

Home made miel
y jugo de mango too poor to put in
splenda © or corn syrup, Lidgia always
w/ an angle to beat the bus line *Ultimo*

one'll say when we are waiting *Permiso*
when we want to get off in La Habana Vieja. My Father

what did he know when he came here
except that he could. He did.

Got his

railroad man's discount (25% off
boat entertainment Larry "F-Troop"
Storch & on the beach, he knew.

Like I knew seeing the Rio Guanabo
I wanted to find its source
as I found mine in Pinar del Rio.

You just know. It's working enough
to stain a shirt in tears (diphtheria)

a single parent.

Track it down. Fend off a Doberman
named Lassie with a fist, go back
to La Esquina Caliente they'll remember

the gringo

(¿es un gringo?) who told them about él Duque
y Contreras the marzo before they won it
all on the South Side por Las Medias
Blancas.

In Cuba we are poor she says
but we are not beggars, we have a spiritual rhythm.
Mascaras the shape of Norte America.
Mascaras to honor los antepasados.
Mascaras en blanco y negro, pushed
by another calm breeze, obscured
by smoke flavored by the iron content
in dirt earth acting

as fire.

3:51P – 12.9.08