

# POEMS FROM CUBA

## The Guerrillas arrive

When the great doors of the day don't open  
the guerrillas arrive  
When our dreams suddenly lose their steering wheels  
the guerrillas arrive  
When at the birth of the infants death is carried in  
under the arm instead of lengths of fresh bread  
the guerrillas arrive  
When freedom can only be written in secret codes  
the guerrillas arrive  
When blood is spilled and forgotten, dropped from the  
memory with the weight of quarry stones  
the guerrillas arrive  
When a joker assures us that men can't reach up  
and touch the stars with their hands  
the guerrillas arrive  
When our small delights must be kept in dungeons  
under lock and key until later in the evening when  
there are no witnesses and we can sit down in a corner  
and savour them  
the guerrillas arrive  
When the mornings are dark and we open our eyes in fear  
the guerrillas arrive  
When bread and laughter and salt and hope can no longer  
be shared  
the guerrillas arrive  
When the ghosts of heroes wander troubled and alone  
in the gloom shouting their protest again and again  
When we begin to feel ashamed of being men  
the guerrillas arrive  
with their heavy boots and their old guns  
and with the bright morning of the world in their hands  
the guerrillas arrive  
the guerrillas arrive  
and it's dawn everywhere

Felix Pita Rodriguez



## For an instant

That glow in the night:  
Is it one of *our* reflectors?  
Is it one of *their* weapons?

(For an instant,  
I'd forgotten  
that there's a moon  
in the sky,  
and that there are stars)

Roberto Fernandez Retamar