

1976

Lime Kiln

Daniel Halpern

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both vulnerable and stark against the landscape, the dull gloss of the bearable Texas heat.

Unsent Letter to Luis Salinas / Robert Mezey

It's hot in the mountains now even at night
and soon you will be in Texas
fighting the sun & looking for the virgin in Mexican bars.
Obsidian eyes that see the human
and the inhuman with the same anguish,
hands of broken wheat,
bones resonating to the grito,
all the weariness of the poor
burns clearly through raw alcohol.
I think of you pushing a heavy brown breast to your mouth
as if you could get away for just one night
or even twenty minutes.
A fiery planet flies around your heart
and a moon around the planet
and stars are shooting everywhere.
Your blood is amazed at all this activity,
and the woman is amazed,
and the bed creaks under the weight of the world.
May you have many children
and the gringos none.

Lime Kiln / Daniel Halpern

Late August, the dead days of lime
bleaching clay near the kiln
at Big Sur. I move forward

in shoes bleached by lime and sun,
and in my face the stain
of lime moving upon me.

The dead pots hump in corners
around the shack. No music here
but the music of white bone

drying beyond water in sun.
Late August. I bring back distant
summers—the air of memory,

the distal air of avatars
mixing water and mud, clay
the admixture of sky and earth.

A few miles away the sea wind
moves, sweeps salt in sheets over birds.
I sit now on the grey wood

of the kiln's benches. It is bright.
The salt, like birds, hovers and then
moves on. I have never been here.

I'll leave no bones still pink with flesh
or blood. There are no bones to leave.
There are no thoughts to leave. Only

the mind runnelled like earth, dry
and bare as the limed earth,
nothing but the wet flesh of memory.

Four Days of Your Death / Jack Myers

In memory of Irving Cohen

1
At the other end without a body
no one believed in his death.
It got larger like the blackness
of a pupil in the dark
until it soaked up all the light
to fill his form.