

Poetry Reading

(Scarborough College)

Class-room #H402

way down Scarborough's concrete catacombs;
a hall of learning that suggests
some soulless architect,
a piece of civilization trapped like an animal.
And I am here, Pablo Neruda,
With only my fire and my song.

Fluorescent lamps bravely fake the sun,
pick up faces: young, sceptical, irreverent;
the host professor leans heavily on his cane,
as he introduces the Sun-Man Poet.
Not a muscle moves. An audience, cold as concrete,
is up against my face.

What would you have done, Pablo,
in this landscape of ice?
Would you have still insisted
that you were only "man of bread and fish,"
that you would "not be found among books,
but with women and men
who have taught you the infinite?"

Yes. I'll fall back on myself,
ply these rapids with my bamboo oars.
So, I give out my secrets
word by exotic word,
sing the truth to a rabana beat,
argue my metaphors of sun,
how the raven can match the eagle in flight,
the elephant dance on a pinhead!

And eyes question,
squint at sun meanings, laugh,
touch darkness, catch fire.
The Sun-Man Poet reclaims the sun
as applause falls around him
like a monsoon rain.

RIENZI CRUZ