



English Studies in Latin America

Selected Poems

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Selected Poems

July Westhale ¹

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Jeremiah in D Minor

No ghosts, all worship,
I'll worship no ghosts—

drama opens: end
life. Landscape, a scene, set up
to end, curtain down.

What do you believe,
if not certainty, heaven?
The day, ticking by,

fog, in a city
of fog. How white, the mountains.
And then, so erased.

You find yourself
high tide, on a high mountain top,
clutching a crucifix—

Death-day for a lost
friend: still the fogs change quickly.
How long you've been gone.

All anniversaries
end here: broken salt rosary
scattered in the bath.

No ghosts, all worship,
I'll worship no ghosts—

Native Tongue

I like girls with hair
still wet, remarked the man

en route to Gent Sint Pieters.
I like girls who sit alone,

bound poems in their hands.
No one waiting in the wings
with stuttering applause.

I like girls who look like girls.
Your mouth is fat and curved,
as a hip turning away from me.

Do you, too, turn away
at night, or light, in day
from those who praise you
call you broken,

when your tongue's removed,
if you refuse?
I like girls who don't talk

back, around their silence
I make myself mad, pretend
they are anything:

As dark, as light, as anything
I like, as open wide. I like girls—
Is this your stop?

Let me help you
find your way—

I like them lost, simple,
bright and blinking as babies
with violent entry into being...

I like you, girl, don't cross
your legs like bent necks
don't give yourself
so easily: I like a harder game—