

## Shitty Frida Kahlo Poem

Frida, we are walking down the street together where the streetcar rails are tucked into stones. And here, where your wooden bus met the trolley. Your hand is hot and cold within mine, and at the intersection, you smile at me. You laugh even at the site of where you broke. I am writing this shitty poem of teleportation, to a time where we overlap, because I think you will understand the stones in my fallopian tubes, that my blood turns hard in my veins from too much sugar, that you may know my dead son's name. You are so summoned by angsty artist women that wear your eyebrows for Halloween. But seriously, Frida, I apologize, these streetcar cables and rails are paved in modern concrete now.

A confession: I have not come for your smile. I have come to take notes on everything about death, and to give up on womanhood. To shave down these hips, bury this flesh fishing net at the foot of the araucaria. The smile, I suppose, would come despite, like the sun, spreads thick, jealous like corn oil. The smile comes, comes, oh smile, just let me sit here and rock for a while, and cuss, and smoke, and be bitter with everything in the world.

At lunch, we eat honeyed and salted sliced avocado. You make the crass joke, holding the green nodes of water up to your skirt where your balls would be. Your tiny blue house could be anywhere, but at least Diego is dead-dead. Not a woman's death, the consciousness always leaning within and beyond the vanishing point; as we say in Florida, "He deeahhdd." We say it long. Frida, you and I are not from the same place. I won't tell that lie. But we are both still running from witch-men, whose pepitas, when milked into us, make us feel like our periods are coming down, and they do—they make us moon bleed. By the way, he married only a year after you died, so much for being fucking special. Hey Frida, what's it all for? This shitty poem can't conjure you. You are too far away in too many ways. You are too everywhere, on every button on a jean jacket, a bobble in every flower crown, on every papier-mâché altar. We are all shitty mini-Fridas. We are all selfishly thanking you for hurting your whole life. I want to thank you for not really being here to listen to this.

Constellations are very sophisticated systems of memory, but each time we tell the story, about how Cassiopeia ended up in a chair in the sky, we change it just a little bit, put our own shit into a narrative that was just fine without us. Frida, you are already a wind in a vacuum, the seed already undone, a tree trunk hollow with decay. I want to be hysterical, I want that for everyone. Why not? Stand in protest on street corners and scream and shout and cuss and growl like animals. I am suspicious of things that aren't messes, of forms that don't give in, what is the lesson in all of this put-togetherness anyway?

As you cast your skirts to muddled halos of embroidery at your feet, I lay on your slatted wooden bed in a beam of afternoon sun. I have been in a similar bed before, with someone else, trying to pull my screwy curls from the matrix of washed linen. You see, I was leaving this lover, I'd like to think, for you, and I did not want to forget anything. You put on the dark gray suit and skinny tie. You shrug your shoulders to the fit, and look over your shoulder. You say, "No one wants to be the Frida that ate pussy, and fucked commies." I nod, roll onto my back. No one wants to be the woman who doesn't give a shit anymore. That is why they call her *amarga*. Better than spreading a rumor of freedom. As I look at a portrait of your father, I think, *Big ups to black and brown girls with white fathers*. But you are neutrino phase, dropping through all matter, and you "hear" my thought and cover my mouth and say, "Some things are just unnecessary to say as long as we have our mothers."

This is not about sadness—life is not a pie chart of emotions—but rather about casting the painted coconut husks—rather breaking the eggs into glass. Chasing feeling with words is like divination. But wait, wait, wait for some light over you. Why don't you just be broken and undirected for a while. Just because I am not laughing doesn't mean that I don't find some shit funny; just because I adorn myself doesn't mean that I want to be seen. Who says we aren't women who are happy and hurting and lonely and fine with it. Hey, Frida, dime algo dulce. . . .