

# Mariano

Robert Earl Keen

The man outside he works for me, his name is Mariano  
He cuts and trims the grass for me he makes the flowers bloom  
He says that he comes from a place not far from Guanajuato  
That's two days on a bus from here, a lifetime from this room  
I fix his meals and talk to him in my old broken  
Spanish  
He points at things and tells me names of things I can't recall  
And sometimes I just can't but help but wonder who this man is  
And if when he is gone will he'll remember me at all  
I watch him close he works just like a piston in an engine  
He only stops to take a drink and smoke a cigarette  
When the day is ended, I look outside my window  
There on the horizon, Mariano's silhouette  
He sits upon a stone in a south-easterly direction  
I know my charts I know that he is thinking of his home  
I've never been the sort to say I'm in to intuition  
But I swear I see the faces of the ones he calls his own  
Their skin is brown as potters clay, their eyes void of  
expression  
Their hair is black as widow's dreams, their dreams are all but gone  
They're ancient as a vision of a sacrificial virgin  
An innocent as crying from a baby being born  
They hover around a dying flame and pray for his protection  
Their prayers are all but answered by his letters in the mail  
He sends them colored figures that he cuts from strips of paper  
And all his weekly wages saving nothing for himself  
It's been a while since I have seen the face of Mariano  
The border guards they came one day and took him far away  
I hope that he is safe down there at home in Guanajuato  
I worry though I read there's revolution every day

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