

THE DIARY OF

Frida Kahlo

An Intimate Self-Portrait

Introduction by
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I only saw Frida Kahlo once. But first, I heard her. I was at a concert in the Palacio de Bellas Artes -- the Palace of Fine Arts in the center of Mexico City, a construction begun under the administration of the old dictator Porfirio Diaz in 1905 and very much in tune with the tastes of the Mexican elite at the turn of the century. An Italianate mausoleum in white marble, fashioned in the purest wedding-cake style, it remained in a state of physical and aesthetic suspension during the following thirty years of civil strife in Mexico. When it was finally inaugurated in 1934, the ornate, frozen meringue of the exterior had been thoroughly denied by the Art Deco interior -- yet another bow to the fashion of a new day. The streamlined, sweeping staircases, balustrades, and corridors shone with burnished copper and beveled glass, while the walls were decorated with the angry, sometimes strident murals of Orozco, Rivera, and Siqueiros.

The auditorium itself was the supreme sanctuary of Art Deco, culminating in a magnificent glass curtain by Tiffany depicting the guardian mountains of the valley of Mexico: the volcanoes Popocatepetl, the Smoking Mountain, and Ixtaccihuatl, the Sleeping Woman. A subtle play of lights permitted the spectator, during intermissions, to go from dawn to dusk, from aurora to crepusculum, in fifteen minutes.

All of this in order to say that as Kahlo entered her box in the second tier of the theater, all of these splendors and distractions came to naught. The jangling of sumptuous jewelry drowned out the sounds of the orchestra, but something beyond mere noise forced us all to look upwards and discover the apparition that announced herself with an incredible throb of metallic rhythms and then exhibited the self that both the noise of the jewelry and the silent magnetism displayed.

It was the entrance of an Aztec goddess, perhaps Coatlicue, the mother deity wrapped in her skirt of serpents, exhibiting her own lacerated, bloody hands the way other women sport a brooch. Perhaps it was Tlazolteotl, the goddess of both impurity and purity in the Indian pantheon, the feminine vulture who must devour filth in order to cleanse the universe. Or maybe we were seeing the Spanish Earth Mother, the Lady of Elche, rooted to the soil by her heavy stone helmet, her earrings as big as cartwheels, her pectorals devouring her breasts, her rings transforming her hands into claws.

A Christmas tree?

A pinata?

Frida Kahlo was more like a broken Cleopatra, hiding her tortured body, her shriveled leg, her broken foot, her orthopedic corsets, under the spectacular finery of the peasant women of Mexico, who for centuries jealously kept the ancient jewels hidden away, protected from poverty, to be displayed only at the great fiestas of the agrarian communities. The laces, the ribbons, the skirts, the rustling petticoats, the braids, the moonlike headdresses opening up her face like the wings of a dark butterfly: Frida Kahlo, showing us all that suffering could not wither, nor sickness stale, her infinite variety.

THE SCHISM OF THE BODY

The body of Frida Kahlo, first of all. Seeing her there, in the opera box, once the clanging had stopped, once the silks and bracelets had rested, once the laws of gravity had imposed a stillness on the grand entrance, once the flares of the procession had died and the ceremonial halo, Aztec and Mediterranean, rabidly un-Anglo, that surrounded Kahlo had dimmed, one could only think:

The body is the temple of the soul. The face is the temple of the body. And when the body breaks, the soul has no other shrine except the face.

What a mysterious sisterhood, I thought as I resumed hearing the Parsifal Overture once the entrance of Frida Kahlo had upstaged everything and everybody, what a mysterious sisterhood between the body of Frida Kahlo and the deep divisions of Mexico during her early years. It all came together in this place, the Palace of Fine Arts, and this woman, the artist Frida Kahlo.

The Palace was conceived during the Pax Porfiriana, the thirty years of self-proclaimed Order and Progress under General Porfirio Diaz, which had come to an end in 1910, three years after Frida's birth. Before that, the epic of Mexican history unfolded very much as in the murals of Kahlo's husband, Diego Rivera. In linear succession, Mexico had gone from Indian empire to Spanish vice-royalty to independent republic. But in Mexico nothing is strictly linear. Within each period, a form of turbulence, an inner spiral, wounds and disrupts the political life of the country, crushes, petrifies, or exiles its symbols.

The Aztec world, a sacrificial theocracy, wanted to wed the promises of peace and creativity symbolized by the Feathered Serpent, Quetzalcoatl, with the bellicose necessities demanded by the bloodthirsty god of war, Huitzilopochtli. Therefore the starkly ambiguous character of the Aztec universe: great artistic and moral achievements side by side with execution, blood rites, and terror. Ancient Mexico became victim of both myths when the Spanish captain Hernan Cortes arrived on the day foreseen for the return of Quetzalcoatl but proved to be as bloody as Huitzilopochtli. But more than the Aztec divinities, Cortes reassembled his own Renaissance model, the condottiero, the Machiavellian prince, and conquered Mexico with a mixture of wile and force.

Mexico is a country that has been made by its wounds. A nation enslaved, forever stunned by the flight of the gods, sadly yet eagerly sought out its new divinities and found them in the father figure -- Christ, the crucified God who did not exact sacrifice from men, but sacrificed himself for all, and Guadalupe, the Virgin who restored pure motherhood to the orphaned Indian, ashamed of the betrayal of La Malinche, Cortes's mistress.

During the Colonial period, Mexico created a mestizo culture, both Indian and European, baroque, syncretic, unsatisfied. Independence, in 1821, liberated the country in the name of freedom but not of equality. The lives of the great masses of Indians and mestizos, mostly peasants, remained unchanged. The laws did change, but had nothing to do with the real life of real people. The divorce between ideal laws and stubborn realities made the nation ungovernable, prey to uninterrupted civil war and foreign invasion. A dismembered, mendicant, humbled Mexico, forever at the foot of foreign creditors, foreign armies, plundering oligarchs: This is the external, dramatic, perhaps obvious Mexico painted by Rivera.

Two foreign traumas -- the loss of half of the national territory to the United States in 1848, the French invasion of 1862 and the phantom crown of Maximilian and Carlota -- made the schism of the body of Mexico unbearable. The nation reacted through the Liberal revolution, the character of Benito Juarez, and the creation of a national state, secular and under the rule of law. Porfirio Diaz perverted the republic of Juarez, gave priority to development over freedom, and placed a mask on the face of Mexico, proclaiming to the world: we are now reliable, progressive, modern. The peasant armies of Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata rose from the land to say no, we are these dark, wounded faces that have never seen themselves in a mirror. No one has ever painted our portraits. Our bodies are broken in half. We are two nations, as Disraeli said of industrial

England. Always two Mexicos, the gilt-edged, paper elite and the downtrodden millions of the earth. When the people rose in 1910, they rode the breadth of Mexico, communicating an isolated country, offering themselves the invisible gifts of language, color, music, popular art. Whatever its political failures, the Mexican Revolution was a cultural success. It revealed a nation to itself. It made clear the cultural continuity of Mexico, in spite of all the political fractures. It educated women like Frida Kahlo and men like Diego Rivera, making them realize all that they had forgotten, all that they wanted to become.

YOUTH: A STREETCAR NAMED RAPE

Rivera and Kahlo. He paints the cavalcade of Mexican history, the endless, at times depressing, repetition of masks and gestures, comedy and tragedy. In his finest moments, something shines behind the plethora of figures and events, and that is a humble beauty, a persevering attachment to color, form, the land and its fruits, the sex and its bodies. But the internal equivalent of this bloody rupture of history is Frida's domain.

As the people are cleft in twain by poverty, revolution, memory, and hope, so she, the individual, the irreplaceable, the unrepeatable woman called Frida Kahlo is broken, torn inside her own body much as Mexico is torn outside. Rivera and Kahlo: has it been sufficiently stressed that they are two sides of the same Mexican coin, almost comical in their Mutt and Jeff disparity? The elephant and the dove, yes, but also the blind bull, in so many ways insensitive, rampaging, immensely energetic, poured towards the outside world, and married to the fragile, sensitive, crushed butterfly who forever repeated the cycle from larva to chrysalis to obsidian fairy, spreading her brilliant wings only to be pinned down, over and over, astoundingly resistant to her pain, until the name of both the suffering and the end of the suffering becomes death.

How much more than this was in Kahlo, was Kahlo, her Diary now shows us: her joy, her fun, her fantastic imagination. The Diary is her lifeline to the world. When she saw herself, she painted and she painted because she was alone and she was the subject she knew best. But when she saw the world, she wrote, paradoxically, her Diary, a painted Diary which makes us realize that no matter how interior her work was, it was always uncannily close to the proximate, material world of animals, fruits, plants, earths, skies.

Born with the Revolution, Frida Kahlo both mirrors and transcends the central event of twentieth-century Mexico. She mirrors it in her images of suffering, destruction, bloodshed, mutilation, loss, but also in her image of humor, gaiety, alegria, that so distinguished her painful life. The resilience, the creativity, the jokes that run through the Diary illuminate the capacity for survival that distinguishes the paintings. All together, these expressions make her fantastically, unavoidably, dangerously, symbolic -- or is it symptomatic? -- of Mexico.

A prancing, cheerful child stricken by polio and stung by the peculiar Mexican capacity for malice, for ridiculing the other, especially the infirm, the imperfect. Beautiful little Frida, the striking child of German, Hungarian, and Mexican parenthoods, little Frida, with her bangs and her billowy ribbons and huge headknots, suddenly becomes Frida the pegleg, Frida *pata de palo*. The taunting screams from the recess playground must have followed her all her life.

They did not defeat her. She became the joker, the sprite, the feminine Ariel of the National Preparatory School at the time when Mexico, intellectually, was discarding the rigid philosophical armor of Scientific Positivism and discovering the indiscreet, if liberating, charms of intuition, children, Indians ...

Mexico, Latin America were then very much under the influence of French culture. France was a way of avoiding two undesirable proximities: the cold, materialistic, Protestant, and overpowering North -- the U.S.A. -- and the chaotic, Catholic, torrid, powerless South -- Spain, ourselves. Auguste Comte and his philosophy of rational, inevitable scientific progression towards human perfection were shed in 1910 in favor of Henri Bergson and his philosophy of the vital elan, intuition, and spiritual evolution. The philosopher Antonio Caso, the novelist Martin Luis Guzmán (who rode with Villa and chronicled the guerrilla leader as a force of nature), the educator José Vasconcelos (who wrote the frankest autobiography Mexico had ever read, candidly revealing his sexual and emotional nakedness), all promoted their version of the Bergsonian vital impulse. Only Alfonso Reyes, the greatest writer of his generation, voted for a sort of Attic detachment. But the arts, more and more, discovered the native, peasant, Indian roots hidden by the marble facades of the Porfiriato.

Kahlo the young, disguised in manly clothes, a Saint Joan of the liberating culture of the Revolution, an armed foot soldier of the Mexican legions of Bergsonism, was part of a group known as Las Cachuchas -- The Caps -- proud and defiant in their denim clothes and proletarian, urchin-like cloth caps, making fun of all solemn figures (including the above-mentioned philosopher Caso, whose classes they turned into sheer turmoil), roaring and ripping through the halls of academe, planting banana peels at the foot of the statues of Scientific Order and Progress, stealing streetcars as in a Buñuel film yet to come.

How close this prankish spirit was to the aesthetics of the revolution in Mexico: Frida Kahlo admired Saturnino Herrán, Dr. Atl, the liberators of Mexican form, landscape, and color from academic restrictions. She is a lover of Brueghel and his belching popular carnivals, full of innocent monsters and perverse gluttons and dark fantasies offered like our daily bread, in bright colors and open sunlight. Fantasy with realism, internal darkness under midday lights. These became fundamental influences on the art of Kahlo.

Without knowing then, she and her friends replayed the outrageous jokes of Dada and Surrealism, but her sources were closer to home. Sighed a former guerrilla turned bureaucrat, "This revolution has now degenerated into a government." The degeneration is chronicled in a few novels and films, but most especially it became the butt of satirical skits staged in the *carpas*, the popular tents in proletarian barrios, from which the great comedians of Mexico -- Soto, Medel, Cantinflas -- would emerge. The *carpas* became the safety valve of a society caught between the promises of the Revolution, its actual achievements in education, health, communications, and its persistent perversions in corruption, undiminished strife, and political authoritarianism.

Mexico City, today the world's largest metropolis, was small then, with no more than 400,000 people. The Revolution, said Kahlo, left Mexico City empty, one million Mexicans having died at war between 1910 and 1920. It was a lovely, rose-colored city of magnificent Colonial churches and palaces, mock-Parisian private mansions, many two-story buildings with big painted gates (*zaguanes*) and wrought-iron balconies; sweet, disorganized parks, silent lovers, broad avenues and dark streets. And crystalline, unpolluted air.

Throughout her life, Kahlo went out in search of the darker city, discovering its colors and smells, laughing in the *carpas*, entering the *cantinas*, searching for the company she could relate to, for Frida Kahlo was a lonely woman in need of comradeship, groups, and very close friendships, Las Cachuchas first, Los Fridos later, the need to be part of a human grenade, closely stuck, to protect her from the rampant cannibalism of Mexican intellectual life. *Defenderse de los cabrones*, "Protect oneself from the bastards." That was one of her lifetime slogans. "It is unbelievable," she

once said of Diego Rivera, "that the lowest insults ... should have been vomited in his own home, Mexico." Not unbelievable at all.

Yet the city she both loved and feared struck at her without pity, In September of 1925 a streetcar crashed into the fragile bus she was riding, broke her spinal column, her collarbone, her ribs, her pelvis. Her already withered leg now suffered eleven fractures. Her left shoulder was now forever out of joint, one of her feet crushed. A handrail crashed into her back and came out through her vagina. At the same time, the impact of the crash left Frida naked and bloodied, but covered with gold dust. Despoiled of her clothes, showered by a broken packet of powdered gold carried by an artisan: will there ever be a more terrible and beautiful portrait of Frida than this one? Would she ever paint herself -- or could she paint herself other than -- as this "terrible beauty, changed utterly"?

The pain, the body, the city, the country. Kahlo. Frida, the art of Frida Kahlo.

SUFFERING: MURDERED BY LIFE

In her great work on the body in pain, Elaine Scarry lucidly notes that the pain of others is but a transitory fact in our own consciousness.

Is pain something you cannot share?

Even more, is pain something that can be said at all?

It is undescrivable, writes Virginia Woolf. You can know the thoughts of Hamlet, but you cannot truly describe a headache. For pain destroys language. Philoctetes, the Greek warrior bitten by a snake, is abandoned on the island of Lemnos to his fetid wounds and his horrifying screams of pain. His speech is punctuated by animal screams and grunts, by the monosyllables of inarticulate suffering. And when Conan Doyle, in one of his eeriest stories, sends a scientific expedition down to the very center of the earth, all that the explorers receive, when they touch the planet's core, is a terrifying scream which almost makes them lose their minds.

Pain, writes Scarry, resists becoming an object of language. So pain is best expressed by those who do not feel it but speak in the name of pain. In a famous page, Nietzsche says that he has decided to call his pain "Dog." "It is equally faithful, unobtrusive and shameless, equally fun to be with ... and I can scold it and vent my evil tempers on it ..."

Frida Kahlo had a Dog called Pain, more than a Pain called Dog. I mean, she directly describes her own pain, it does not render her mute, her scream is articulate because it achieves a visible and emotional form. Frida Kahlo is one of the greatest speakers for pain in a century that has known, perhaps not more suffering than other times, but certainly a more unjustified and therefore shameful, cynical and publicized, programmed, irrational, and deliberate form of suffering than ever. From the Armenian massacres to Auschwitz, from the rape of Nanking to the gulag, from the Japanese POW camps to the nuclear holocaust in Hiroshima, we have seen pain, we have felt horror, as never before in history. How could this all happen in our own modern, progressive, civilized times?

The bloodshed of the Mexican Revolution is small beer indeed next to the executions ordered by Hitler and Stalin. Frida Kahlo, as no other artist of our tortured century, translated pain into art. She suffered thirty-two operations from the day of her accident to the day of her death. Her

biography consists of twenty-nine years of pain. From 1944 on, she is forced to wear eight corsets. In 1953, her leg is amputated as gangrene sets in. She secretes through her wounded back, "smelling like a dead dog." She is hung naked, head down, from her feet, to strengthen her spinal column. She loses her fetuses in pools of blood. She is forever surrounded by clots, chloroform, bandages, needles, scalpels. She is the Mexican Saint Sebastian, slinged and arrowed. She is the tragic embodiment of Plato's very forthright description: The body is like a tomb that imprisons us much as the oyster is caught within the shell.

She reminds one of the Aztec goddesses of Birth and Earth, but even more of the flagellant deity, Xipe Totec, Our Lord of the Flayed Skin, the dualistic divinity whose skin was never his own, whether he wore that of the sacrificial victim as a macabre cloak, or whether he himself was shedding his own skin, as a serpent does, to signify a rite of renewal, even of resurrection. (The gods of Mexico have this ambiguous quality: the good they promise is inseparable from the evils they bestow. Xipe Totec, symbol of resurrection, Spring deity, also inflicts sacrifices, blisters, and festering on his human devotees.)

In *The Broken Column* or in *Tree of Hope*, Kahlo portrays herself as this flayed skin, this bleeding, open skin, cut in half like a papaya fruit. As she lies naked in a hospital bed in Detroit, bleeding and pregnant, Rivera writes: "endurance of truth, reality, cruelty, and suffering. Never before had a woman put such agonized poetry on canvas ..." For what she lives is what she paints. But no human experience, painful as it may be, becomes art by itself. How did Kahlo transform personal suffering into art, not impersonal, but shared?

ART: LIONS IN THE BOOKSHELF

Her pain. Her body. These are sources of Kahlo's art, but not sufficient, not the only. There is Guillermo Kahlo, her father, a photographer of German and Hungarian-Jewish descent, whose work is close to the rigidity of the posed nineteenth-century portrait. Guillermo Kahlo was much in demand for calendar pictures, probably still caught in the astonishment of being able to give everybody a face. The camera robs the court and even the bourgeois painter of their privilege. Not only the rich, not only the powerful, have a right to own a face. You need no longer count on Velazquez or Joshua Reynolds to immortalize your unique, irrepeatable, but alas, mortal features. Now, the inexpensive camera frees you from anonymity.

Then there is the Mexican church *retablo*, the humble *ex-voto* painted on wood or metal by anonymous and equally humble hands, recounting a terrible happening, an accident, an illness, a painful loss, and thanking the saints, God, the Holy Virgin, and their local manifestations -- the Virgin of Zapopan, the Holy Child of Atocha -- for saving our life, our health, our resilience to loss, illness, pain. Thanks for the Miracle.

And then there is Jose Guadalupe Posada, the marvelous Mexican graphic artist of the turn of the century, who drew and printed broadsheets informing the voiceless and the untutored of the happenings, big and small, that concerned their curiosity and even their lives: scenes of murder, suicide, strangulation, mayhem in the streets, brawls in cantinas, monstrosities, and revolutions. Death, whether riding a bicycle or wearing a Lillian Russell hat, presides over the news. It presides over time and history. Only dreams, including nightmares, seem to have an autonomous, liberated spirit.

But Posada descends from the artistic parentage of Goya, the Spanish universalizer of the eccentric and the marginal from the medieval roundelays of pestilence and death, the danse

macabre, and from Brueghel and his rendering of popular life in colorful, minute detail. And to them all, Kahlo adds two favorites, one from the past, one from the present: Bosch and Magritte. They teach Frida that fantasy requires a realistic brush.

She is capable of coming back to her original sources and transforming them. She animates her father's photographs, while retaining some of their stilted flavor. She also takes his calendars and fills them with an interior time, a subjective experience of night and day, summer and fall. "September" is her "September," not the ninth month -- birth, perhaps miscarriage -- of a successive year. Time stands still only to go underground and reappear tinged with the personal images of Frida Kahlo. Not a painter of dreams, she insisted, but a painter of her own reality. "I paint myself because I am alone. I am the subject I know best."

Her reality is her own face, the temple of her broken body, the soul she has left. Like Rembrandt, like Van Gogh, Kahlo tells her biography through her self-portraits. The stages of passion, innocence, suffering, and finally, wisdom, are as evident in the Mexican as in the two great Dutch self-portraitists. But the aura of strangeness, displacement, of objects and dislocation of sceneries, as well as her spontaneous irrationality, have sometimes associated her, as well, with Surrealism.

A ribbon around a bombshell is how Andre Breton described her art, paraphrasing, in a way, Lautreamont's celebrated definition of art as "the chance encounter of a sewing machine and an umbrella on a dissection table." She is not foreign to the spirit of Surrealism, to be sure. She adores surprises. She would like to see lions come out of bookshelves, instead of books. There is perhaps a marvelous innocence in all of this. Luis Bunuel visited Breton on his deathbed. The old pope of Surrealism took the great filmmaker's hand and said: "Do you realize that no one is surprised any more?"

It is a fitting epitaph on the twentieth-century vanguard's penchant for shocking the bourgeoisie.

Yet Frida Kahlo remains (along with Posada) the most powerful reminder that what the French Surrealists codified has always been an everyday reality in Mexico and Latin America, part of the cultural stream, a spontaneous fusing of myth and fact, dream and vigil, reason and fantasy. The works of Gabriel Garcia Marquez and what has come to be labeled "magical realism" are the contemporary images of this truth. Yet the great contribution of the Hispanic spirit, from Cervantes to Borges, and from Velazquez to Kahlo, is the certainty that imagination is capable of founding, if not the world, then certainly a world.

Don Quixote, *Las Meninas*, the *Caprichos* of Goya, *The Aleph* by Borges, the paintings of Matta, Lam, or Tamayo, *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, add something to reality that was not there before. This is a project far more conscious and acute in societies where reality itself finds scarce political representation. The artist then gives to the society what a repressive authoritarian system takes from, or deprives the society, of.

Miguel Angel Asturias, the Guatemalan writer, and Alejo Carpentier, the Cuban novelist, witnessing the Surrealist Revolution of the 1920s in Paris, soon realized that what Breton and his friends were legislating in France was already the law of life and the imagination in Latin America. Pre-Columbian myth, Afro-American rites, the Baroque hunger for the object of desire, the masks of religious syncretism, gave Latin America its own patent for Surrealism with no need to submit, in the name of anti-Cartesian freedom of association, to very Cartesian rules on what dreams, intuitions, and prosody should properly be like. The French Surrealists, while advocating automatic expression, would still write like eighteenth-century court diarists. Breton's prose is as

correct and elegant as that of the Duc de Saint-Simon. Luis Bunuel and Max Ernst, the greatest Surrealists, found their sources, as well as their power to alter and criticize the world, in their own national cultures. Bunuel's films are a single, anarchical, corrosive revision of the very Catholic Spanish culture that nurtured him, while Ernst is the last descendant of the Brothers Grimm and the fantastic fairy tales of the dark German forests: thanks to this tradition, he makes visible the obscurest recesses of dream and nightmare.

This is Kahlo's brand of Surrealism: a capacity to convoke a whole universe out of the bits and fragments of her own self and out of the persistent traditions of her own culture. A vast culture, as I have pointed out. From Bosch and Brueghel to Posada, photography, *ex-votos*, and perhaps film. Kahlo loved comic film. Laurel and Hardy, the Three Stooges, Chaplin, the Marx Brothers, were her great entertainments. And who and what were these comedians? They are anarchists, perpetually at odds with the law, pursued by the fuzz, answering the demands of law and order with pratfalls, custard pies, and an undefeatable innocence.

Yet no matter how many strands and strains we find in Kahlo's artistic family tree, there always remains a shining, solitary, untransferable question for the artist: How and why did she create such good art? She herself would give a number of answers. Her love of surprise (lions in the bookshelves), her sense that frankness and intimacy were inseparable, her will to eliminate from her paintings all that did not originate in her own interior, lyrical impulses. My themes, she said, are my sensations, my states of mind, my reactions to life. There is Mexico, of course, a country where everything is (or used to be, B.P.: Before Plastics) art, from the humblest kitchen utensil to the loftiest Baroque altar.

All of this, nevertheless, does not account, item by item, for an art which is fused through and through by beauty. What sort of beauty? we have a right to ask. Is this beauty, this terrifying sequence of open wounds, blood clots, miscarriages, black tears, *un mar de lagrimas*, indeed, a sea of tears?

Frida Kahlo understood, as a part of both her European and Mexican heritage, this simple fact: It is one thing to be a body, and another thing to be beautiful. Kahlo managed to establish a distance from ugliness only to see what was ugly, painful, or cruel with a clearer eye, discovering her affinity, if not with the current model of beauty (Memling, thin? Rubens, fat? Parton, bust? Bardot, derriere? Mae West or Twiggy), then with the truth about her own self, her own face, her own body. Through her art, Kahlo seems to come to terms with her own reality: The horrible, the painful, can lead us to the truth of self-knowledge. It then becomes beautiful simply because it identifies our very being, our innermost qualities. Kahlo's self-portraits are beautiful for the same reason as Rembrandt's: They show us the successive identities of a human being who is not yet, but who is becoming.

This manner of conceiving beauty as truth and self-knowledge, as becoming -- *devenir* -- requires unblinking courage and is Kahlo's great legacy to the marginal, the invisible men and women of an increasingly faceless, anonymous planet, where only the "photogenic" or the "shocking," as seen on the screens, merits our vision.

Socrates, famous for his ugliness, asked us to close our eyes in order to see "our own internal beauty." Kahlo goes beyond the Socratic demand to close our eyes and open them to a new way of seeing. Sight is the clearest of all the senses, writes Plotinus, yet it is incapable of seeing the soul. And this is so, he adds, because if we were able to see the soul, it would awaken in us a

terrible love, an *intolerable love*. Only beauty has the privilege of looking at the soul without being blinded.

This is Kahlo's privilege. Her art is certainly not an absolute way of discovering the inner self and its identification with beauty in spite of external appearances. Far more than that, it is an approximation of self, of becoming, of not yet, never a fulfillment, always an approach, a search for form which, when found, achieves the Yeatsian aesthetics I evoked a few pages back: "All changed, changed utterly. A terrible beauty is born."

POLITICS: A BOMB WRAPPED IN RIBBONS

There is an anecdote in Hayden Herrera's famous biography of Kahlo. A frustrated young North American dilettante, Dorothy Hale, committed suicide in 1939 by jumping from a high floor in the Hampshire House building in New York. Her friend Clare Boothe Luce asked Kahlo to paint an homage to the unfortunate and beautiful young woman. The result horrified Luce. Instead of an image of piety and respect-for-the-dead, Frida came up with a startling, sequential yet simultaneistic narrative picture of the suicide itself. We see Hale jumping, in midair, and finally crushed, lifeless and bleeding, on the pavement, staring at the world -- at us -- with eternally open eyes.

Luce admits that she wanted "to destroy the painting with a pair of library scissors, and I wanted a witness to this act." However, she was finally contented when the "offensive legend" saying that she had commissioned the painting was rubbed out.

"Rubbed out": this underworld term, so often heard in Hollywood gangster films, reveals and recalls two facts of Mexican art in relation to U.S. culture. For if the culture of Mexico, as implied in Clare Boothe Luce's censorship of Kahlo's painting, is violent, so is that of Anglo-Saxon America. The genocide of the native Indians, the rape and robbery of their lands, Black slavery, wars against weaker nations, territorial annexations, robber barons, capitalist exploitation, all of this, right down to the urban violence of our own days: this great violence has been generally rubbed out of U.S. history in favor of more epic or idyllic visions. But the culture is then left without appropriate, cathartic, lasting, and even beautiful images of its own violence.

The question, then, is not, when did the U.S.A. lose its innocence? but rather, was the U.S.A. ever innocent? And in consequence, if North American violence is ugly, factual, and lacking in an aesthetic imagery, is it the destiny of Mexico to provide the U.S.A. with beautiful, lasting images of death -- including violence?

I am not belittling the great beauty of many films, paintings, novels, poems, from Hawthorne to Warhol, from Poe to Peckinpah, which express the violence of the U.S.A. I am merely trying to establish a relationship, a questioning, probably a Mexican self-delusion, in relation to the U.S.A.: is it the destiny of Mexico to provide its northern neighbor with beautiful, lasting images of violence, including death?

"Rubbed out": is it not significant, in this sense, that Mexican art in the U.S.A. should constantly have been censored, picketed, hung down, rubbed out (and also, to be just, courageously defended)? The Siqueiros mural in Olvera Street, Los Angeles. The Rivera murals in Rockefeller Center, Detroit, and the New School. The Orozco mural at Pomona College, California, where a penis-less Prometheus resists the torture of vultures pecking at his body. Have the birds of prey cannibalized, Bobbitt-like, his dick? The vendetta of the student body at Pomona against the

censorship imposed on Orozco by the academic authorities is a graffito under the mural: "Prometheus, you must hang it out before you slip it in."

What is this fear, objectively demonstrated in acts of censorship, of the Mexican symbol -- sexual, political, or otherwise -- in the Anglo-American mind?

A ribbon around a bombshell, answered Andre Breton, defining the art of Frida Kahlo, its explosive or, even better, as Breton would have it, its *convulsive* beauty. The political dimension of this sentence is of course closely related to the Surrealist nostalgia for unity recovered. The internal, oneiric, psychic revolution should be inseparable from the external, political, material, liberating revolution. The marriage of Marx and Freud. But in Kahlo's truly subversive mind, perhaps this would turn out to be the marriage of Groucho Marx and Woody Allen. In an interview several years ago, my wife asked Eugene Ionesco who the two most intelligent and most foolish men of modern times had been. Ionesco answered: Marx and Freud, on both counts. They were rabbis of genius, but foolish rabbis, for they were talkative and betrayed the rabbinical wisdom of silence.

The conflict between the two revolutions, the internal and the external, has pursued all of the writers and artists of the twentieth century. Surrealism shared with Marxism the dream of a humankind liberated from alienation and returned to its pristine origin, the age of gold, when all things belonged to all men, and no one said: This is mine. The Surrealists, furthermore, were the final heirs to the last great all-encompassing European cultural movement, Romanticism. And Romanticism preached, also, a return to the wholeness of man, the unity of the origin, fractured by the history of greed, oppression, alienation. In this, again, Marxists and Romantics could shake hands.

Milan Kundera is perhaps (because of his Czech education) the first writer to have explained that Communism exerted a great attraction on young people everywhere, not because of its abstruse materialist philosophy or even because of Marx's deep and lasting critique of the economy, but because it offered an idyll of purity, of return to original humankind. This was the political culmination of the Romantic dream. Stalin certainly put an end to this illusion, but in the Mexico of the 1930s, Trotsky's exile gave hope to many that the Stalinist perversion could still be corrected and a true worker's state set up, sometime, somewhere.

Frida Kahlo lived in the political Mexico of the revolutionary one-party state, the system of the PNR (National Revolutionary Party), grandparent of the present, endless PRI (Party of Revolutionary Institutions). In the name of furthering the conquests of the Revolution, the Party demanded unity and subservience. There was no other way of combating the foes of the Revolution, i.e., the internal reactionaries (the Catholic Church, the expropriated land-owners) and the external reactionaries (the government of the U.S.A. and the companies it protected in Mexico). In exchange for unity, the government would give Mexicans economic development and social peace. But not democracy, since political freedom would diminish the supreme value of National Unity against foes internal and external.

Nevertheless, the revolutionary governments did push through agrarian reform, public education, a national health and communications system. The aura of revolutionary progress in Mexico attracted many foreign radicals to our country. Frida Kahlo knew Julio Antonio Mella, the founder of the Cuban Communist Party, and his equally radical paramour, the Italian photographer Tina Modotti -- he was assassinated on a Mexico City street by agents of the Cuban government, she by his side.

Closer to home, Frida's first and great love, the student leader Alejandro Gómez Arias, was unmasking the Mexican government's revolutionary pretensions and calling for the nation's youth, "the Mexican Samurais," to challenge the one-party system. So did the philosopher José Vasconcelos, himself the first Education Minister of the Revolution, our Lunacharsky, the philosopher-statesman who gave the public buildings over to the mural painters. In 1929, Vasconcelos starred in an ill-fated attempt to win the presidency in a rigged election. Also in 1929, Kahlo saw the young revolutionary dandy German de Campo, a wonderful orator, fall in a public park as he spoke, killed by a government bullet. The Revolution, like Saturn, was eating her own children. Revolutionary generals opposed to the ruling generals, and uprisings of disaffected military abounded.

Lázaro Cárdenas, president between 1934 and 1940, attempted to reconcile national unity and authentic social progress. It was Cárdenas who admitted Leon Trotsky to Mexico, saving him, for a time, from Stalin's assassins. Diego Rivera received Trotsky, offered him hospitality and protection, and weathered the blistering attacks of the Mexican Communists. Frida's politics, such as they were, could not be separated from the personality and the actions of Diego Rivera.

First an exciting young Cubist in Paris, Rivera discovered the epic thrill of Renaissance painting (particularly Uccello) and allied it to the nativist lines of Gauguin in Tahiti. His "Mexican" vision -- quite legitimately so -- owed its techniques to European art, more than to Mexican Pre-Columbian aesthetics or, even, to Mexican popular art (Frida was much closer to this than he). Nothing new here. The other muralists were also, formally, more European than they cared to recognize. José Clemente Orozco was a German Expressionist and David Alfaro Siqueiros an Italian Futurist. Maya or Aztec artists they certainly were not, and could not be. Their Mexicanist themes required the new, universal forms of the European vanguard in order to be artistically relevant.

A clue to the Mexican artists' love affair with the modern is supplied by Rivera's admiration for modern industry. He surprised many North American and European intellectuals by his glorification of steel and smoke, even praising the beauty of the bank vault. This was the alienation denounced by the likes of Chaplin in *Modern Times*, and before him by the solar-plexus novels of D. H. Lawrence, and of course, at the very beginning of the Industrial Revolution, by Blake when he spoke of industry's "dark Satanic mills."

That a contemporary Mexican Marxist, so enamored of the humble Indian and the exploited peasant, should also espouse the idyll of industry and materialism only serves to underscore the apparent contradictions of the whole Mexican process, so captured between its native impulses, the Zapata syndrome, and its modernizing impulses, the Ford syndrome. I think that for Rivera there was no contradiction between the two. The great staircase murals at the National Palace in Mexico City actually describe his chiliastic vision of history. The Indian panel culminates with the Emperor and the Sun. The Colonial panel with the Church and the Cross. The Republican panel, with the Red Flag and Karl Marx. All, finally, are millenarist visions of the Church triumphant, not civil or civic proposals.

But when all is said and done, what Rivera, Kahlo, and all the artists of the Mexican Revolution were really discovering, without fully realizing it, was that Mexico has an unbroken, generous, all-encompassing culture in which the past is always present. On this basis we should be able to create an inclusive, not an exclusive, modernity. This, I believe, is the true goal of Latin America, a continent that cannot hope to be explained without its Indian, Black, and European (Mediterranean, Iberian, Greek, Roman, Arab, Jewish) roots.

Frida, then, saw politics through Rivera. And Rivera was an anarchist, a mythomaniac, a compulsive liar, and a fantastic storyteller. How were these qualities (or defects, if you wish) to blend with dogmatic Communism? I have a suspicion that many Latin American Communists are really lapsed Catholics in need of reassurance. Having lost the Catholic roof, they yearn for the Communist shelter. After all, Saint Peter's was a relic of the past, the Kremlin a harbinger of the future. Today when religions resurrect and Marxism is pronounced dead, it is interesting to hark back to the 1930s and try to understand both its illusions and loss of the same. Perhaps our premature burials and resurrections will also be severely judged someday.

Frida and Diego: She admitted that she had suffered two accidents in her life, the streetcar accident and Diego Rivera. Of her love for the man there can be no doubt. He was unfaithful. She reproached him: How could he consort with women unworthy of him or inferior to her?

He admitted it: "The more I loved her, the more I wanted to hurt her." She riposted with many lovers, both men and women. He tolerated the women who loved Frida, but not the men. She absorbed it all in her almost pantheistic, earth-mother, Coatlicue and Lady of Elche, cleansing-vulture manner of love. She wanted to "give birth to Diego Rivera." "I am him," she wrote, "from the most primitive and ancient cells ... at every moment he is my child, my child born every moment, daily from my self."

Such a love, for such a man, in such conditions, could only lead to both sexual fulfillment outside of the child-marriage and to political allegiance within it. Perhaps Frida attempted to bridge both fulfillment and allegiance through her love affair with Leon Trotsky. But Trotsky and Rivera were so different that the arrangement could not hold. The formal, rationalist, disciplined, authoritarian, extremely Old World, European Trotsky was like ice to the fire of the fibbing, sensual, informal, intuitive, taunting, and joking, very New World Rivera. Lev Davidovich the dialectician. Diego Maria the anarchist. Never the twain could meet, and the final rupture between the two men made the woman follow her true, unfaithful, magnificent, torturing, and tender lover: Diego Rivera.

Rivera himself had his eternal love affair with Communism. In and out of the Party, to the extent of firing himself from it, or receiving the heretic Trotsky in Mexico, he withstood the constant assaults of the *apparatchiks*. What kind of revolutionary was this Rivera, painting murals in Mexican public buildings and American capitalist citadels, receiving money from reactionary Mexican governments and gringo millionaires? Rivera must have had a good laugh: here he was, called a tool of Communism by the millionaires and a tool of capitalism by the Communists. In a sense, it was the best of both worlds! But Frida was right: like many lapsed Catholics who on their deathbeds ask for a priest to confess them, Rivera needed the final rites of the Communist Party.

He was finally readmitted to the political church in 1954, (Frida had dutifully also sought readmission.) Marx, Lenin, and Stalin began to appear in her iconography with the same regularity that Christ, the Virgin, and the saints appear in the Catholic ex-votos that so influenced her art. Marx, Lenin, Stalin. They were the new mediators. Thanks to them the new miracle would occur.

The Cold War sealed these political positions. Not everyone was capable of humor as the Strangeloves held sway in Washington and Moscow and taught us to fear the bomb. I remember the day of Stalin's death, March 4, 1953. My friends and I held a party (Dzhughashvili's Wake) at the loft of the painter and poet Salvador Elizondo in an old Colonial palace on Tacuba Street, where we drank and celebrated the passing of the Man of Steel around a celebrated clipping from

that day's edition of a Mexican newspaper, sporting Stalin's effigy framed in black and the supremely pithy headline; "YA!!" ("DEAD!" "GONE!" "NO MORE!"), surrounded, as the church *retablos*, as Frida's own paintings, by votive lamps. "I lost my balance with the death of Stalin," Frida wrote.

But were we not all together again, united in July of 1954, by the overthrow of the democratic government in Guatemala by a CIA-organized coup? The Good Neighbor Policy was over. The years of Franklin Roosevelt were over. Now, John Foster Dulles pronounced the Guatemala adventure "a glorious victory for democracy." Guatemala sank into forty years of unending dictatorship, genocide, torture, and suffering. Perhaps Frida and Diego grossly overestimated the Communist promise. They did not underestimate the menace of U.S. foreign policy in Latin America.

Such were the parameters of our political life as my generation struggled to find a level of reason and humanity between the Manichean demands of the Cold War and its frozen inhuman warriors -- the Berias, Molotovs, and Vishinkys on one side, the Dulleses, Nixons, and McCarthys on the other. The manifestation for Guatemala was Frida's last appearance in public. She now began her cruel decline towards final suffering and death.

But was there not a deeper sense to her politics than Rivera, Marxism, the Cold War? A glance at her art tells us the truth: Frida Kahlo was a natural pantheist, a woman and an artist involved in the glory of universal celebration, an explorer of the interrelatedness of all things, a priestess declaring everything created as sacred. Fertility symbols -- flowers, fruits, monkeys, parrots -- abound in her art, but never in isolation, always intertwined with ribbons, necklaces, vines, veins, and even thorns. The latter may hurt, but they also bind. Love was the great celebration, the great union, the sacred event, and Frida's love letters to Alejandro Gómez Arias seem written by Catherine Earnshaw to Heathcliff in a Mexican *Wuthering Heights*, where great romantic passion is driven by the necessity to reunite the whole of creation:

Deep down, you understand me, you know I adore you. You are not only something that is mine, you are me myself.

No wonder that to the demands of revolutionary realism in art she could only answer, truthfully, privately, in her Diary: "I cannot, I cannot!" Her iconographic tokens are there. Her art is elsewhere, engaged not in bowing to reality, but in convoking yet another, a further, an invented reality.

DRESSED FOR PARADISE

There is a humor in Kahlo that transcends politics and even aesthetics, tickling the ribs of life itself: The Diary is the best example of this ribald, punning, dynamic genius for humorous language that makes Kahlo such an endearing and, finally, happy figure, in spite of all the suffering. Her voice, all who knew her tell us, was deep, rebellious, punctuated by *caracajadas* -- belly laughs -- and by *leperadas* -- four-letter words.

To be obscene means to be out of stage, un-scene, un-seen, and Kahlo filled the cup of her moments outside the scene of art and the stage of her highly theatrical persona with jokes both practical and linguistic. The irreverence dated back to the Cachucha days, the stealing of streetcars, the mocking of professors, her ability, in spite of polio, to jump off and onto streetcars, her final mutilation by a streetcar, her love for *carpas* and *cantinas*, her joy in singing and hearing

Mexican love songs, ballads, and *corridos* -- history as recalled and sung by the people, yet another link with the art of Posada and the *ex-voto*. Her immense love of friends, her *cuates*, her *cuatachos*, her *cuatezones*, that is, in an Aztec derivation which is extremely popular in Mexico, her friends seen as her twins, her comrades, her brethren.

She could sing the beautiful couplets of *La Malaguena* with a perfect falsetto. She got along with carpenters, bartenders, shoemakers, anarchists, servants, budding artists. She had the Mexican knack of turning all words into diminutives, charming the words, babying them, caressing them, discovering, as it were, the clitoris of pleasure in each word: *chaparrita* for small women, *chulito* for her male friends, *doctorcito*, even *doctorcito Wilsoncito*, for her many doctors, signing herself *chiquita*, *chicuita*, tiny one, the smallest one, *Friducha*, little ol' Frida, herself.

Mexican diminutives are a form of defense against the arrogance of the rich and the oppression of the Mexican authoritarian tradition. Diminutives fake courtesy and submission before the powerful, they anesthetize the arrogant. Then, one day, like Kahlo on her bed of pain, Mexico starts "shooting my way out of the hospital and starting my own revolution." As an artist of great merit and popularity, she was also conscious of the critical cannibalizing which is a permanent characteristic of Mexican intellectual life, where bevvies of frustrated dwarfs have their machetes ready to decapitate anyone who stands above them. Her humor, her language, her own very personal chutzpah, were ways of defending herself against the bastards -- *Defenderse de Los cabrones*.

She applied her humor, as well, to the U.S.A., all the time admitting that the Rockefellers fired you while showing their faces, while Mexicans practiced the stab in the back. Like Rivera, nevertheless, she was baffled by gringo faces and could not paint them. They seemed colorless to her, like half-baked rolls, she said. And the American women who tried to imitate her ended up looking like "cabbages."

But in the U.S.A., as in Mexico, Kahlo and Rivera loved to puncture pretension and defy prejudice. She descended from Hungarian Jews, he from Sephardic exiles of the Spanish Diaspora of 1492. What better way of entering the U.S.A., when some hotels were barred to Jews, than announcing (ten years before Laura Hobson's *Gentleman's Agreement*) as they registered at the front desk, that they, the Riveras, were Jewish? What greater fun than sitting at dinner with the renowned anti-Semite Henry Ford and inquiring: "Mr. Ford, are you Jewish?"

Necklaces, rings, white organdy headgear, flowery peasant blouses, garnet-colored shawls, long skirts, all of it covering the broken body. Yet dress was a form of humor, too, a great disguise, a theatrical, self-fascinated form of autoeroticism, but also a call to imagine the suffering, naked body underneath and discover its secrets. Rivera said that women are more pornographic than men, for they have sensuality in every part of their body, whereas men have their sexual organs "in just one place." Perhaps Frida pretended to agree and tried not to disappoint Rivera. But in some of her descriptions of her Frog Prince of a husband, she shows us how aware she was that men have as many erogenous zones as women.

The clothes of Frida Kahlo were, nevertheless, more than a second skin. She said it herself: They were a manner of dressing for paradise, of preparing for death. Perhaps she knew that the ancient masks of Teotihuacan, beautifully wrought in mosaic, were meant to cover the faces of the dead, so as to make the corpses presentable in their trip to paradise.

Perhaps her extraordinary regalia, capable of drowning out a Wagner opera when she entered the theater, was but an anticipation of her shroud. She took to her clothes, writes Hayden Herrera, as a nun takes to her veil. She feared ending like the old king Tezozomoc, who was put inside a basket, all wrapped in cotton, for the rest of his days. Her luxurious dresses hid her broken body; they also permitted her to act in a ceremony of ceremonies, a dressing and undressing of herself as laborious, regal, and ritualistic as those of the Emperor Moctezuma, who was helped by several dozen handmaidens, or the *levee* of the French kings at Versailles, which was witnessed by practically the whole court.

While death tiptoed towards her, she dressed in full regalia to lie in bed and paint. "I am not sick," she would write. "I am broken. But I am happy to be alive as long as I can paint." But as death approaches, the tone changes. "You are killing yourself," she realizes, as drugs and alcohol both alleviate and condemn her increasingly. But she quickly adds: "There are those who will no longer forget you ..."

Her death comes in Mexico, from Mexico, on July 13, 1954. Our difference from the European conceptions of death as finality is that we see death as origin. We descend from death. We are all children of death. Without the dead, we would not be here, we would not be alive. Death is our companion. Frida had the sense of fooling death, of fooling around with death, using her powers of language to describe death as *La Mera Dientona*, Old Buck Teeth; *La Tostada*, The Toasted One; a euphemism for *La Chingada*, the Fucked One; *La Catrina*, The Belle of the Ball; *La Pelona*, The Hairless Bitch, like her beloved *itzcuintli* puppy dogs. She also spoke of death as *La Tia de las Muchachas*, The Girls' Aunt, a curious reference to the Spanish title of the Brandon Thomas farce of 1892, *Charleys Aunt*, where one of the male characters has to disguise himself in lace and crepes as a ponderous old maid, Charley's aunt from Brazil, "where the nuts come from."

Humorous and companionable as death may be, it is important, it is Henry James's "the distinguished thing." Kahlo says almost the same, calling death "an enormous and very silent exit."

Incinerated, she sits bolt upright in the oven, her hair on fire like a halo. She smiles at her friends before dissolving.

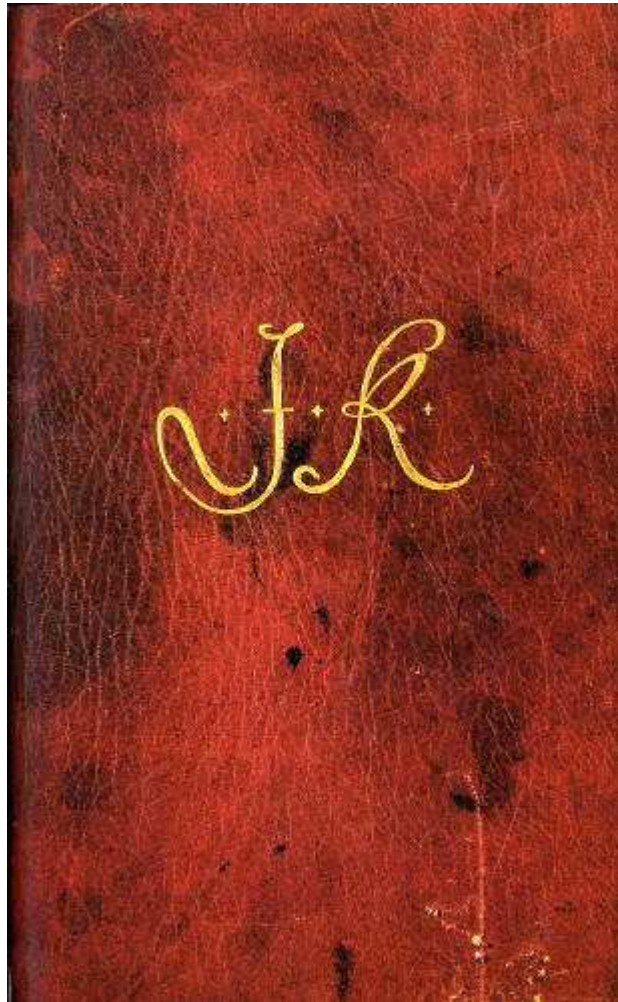
KEYS: KAYS

FK, Frida Kahlo, Franz Kafka. Two of the greatest symbolic figures of the twentieth century share their initials, their pain, perhaps even their positions in the world. Kafka sees himself as an animal hanging over an abyss, his hind legs still stuck to his father's traditions, his forelegs finding no firm ground. Kahlo, tortured, hung, mutilated, cut up in bits and pieces, eternally metamorphosed by both sickness and art, could say along with her brother Jew from Prague: "There shall be much hope, but not for us": Prague, "the little mother," has claws. So does Mexico City. They do not let go. Kafka's Kahlo, Franz's Frieda: The heroine of The Castle, Kafka's Frieda, is both the way to salvation and the agony of romantic love. For them both, the K of Prague and the K of Mexico, Nietzsche memorably wrote, "Whoever has built a new heaven has found the strength for it only in his own hell."

In the measure that her hope was her art and her art was her heaven, the Diary is Kahlo's greatest attempt to bridge the pain of their body with the glory, humor, fertility, and outwardness of the world. She painted her interior being, her solitude, as few artists have done. The Diary connects her to the world through a magnificent and mysterious consciousness that "we direct ourselves

towards ourselves through millions of beings -- stones -- bird creatures -- star beings -- microbe beings -- sources of ourselves."

She will never close her eyes. For as she says here, to each and everyone of us, "I am writing to you with my eyes."



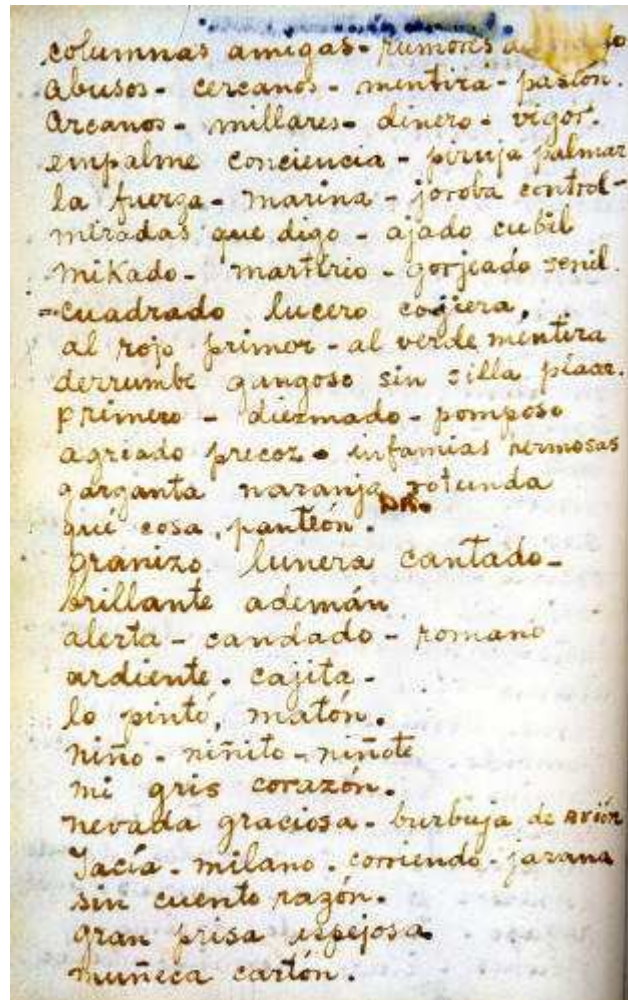


Painted 1916

no, luna, sol, diamante, manos --
 yema, punto, rayo, gasa, mar.
 verde pino, vidrio rosa, ojo.
 mina, gema, lodo, madre, voy.
 = amor amarillo, dedos, útil
 niño flor, deseo, ardid, resina.
 potrero, bismuto, santo, sopera.
 gajo, año, estaño, otro potrero.
 puntilla, máquina, arroyo, soy.
 metileno, quasa, cáncer, risa.
 gorjeo - mirada - cuello, niña
 pelo negro seda niña viento
 padre pena pirata saliva
 sacate mordaza consumo vivaz
 onda - rayo - tierra - rojo - soy.
 Abril. día 30..
 Niño - cuajo, suyo, rey, radio negro -
 álamo stno busco - manos hoy.
 Olmo. Olmedo. Violeta. canario
 zumbido. pedrada - blancor del gris.
 Camino - silueta - ternura
 corrido - gangrena - petrarca
 Mirasol - siniestros aules - agudo
 Romero - ambajes - basuras - ayer
 resaca - tumbando - arrimo.

no moon, sun, diamond, hands --
 fingertip, dot, ray, gauze, sea.
 pine green, pink glass, eye,
 mine, eraser, mud, mother, I am coming.
 = yellow love, fingers, useful
 child, flower, wish, artifice, resin,
 pasture, bismuth, saint, soup tureen.
 segment, year, tin, another foal.
 point, machine, stream, I am,
 methylene, joke, cancer, laughter,
 warble - glance - neck, vine
 black hair silk girl wind =
 father grief pirate saliva
 hay clamp consumption lively
 wave - ray - earth - red - I am,
 April, 30th.
 child-rennet, his, king, black radio --
 poplar destiny I search - hands today.
 Elm tree. Olmedo. Violet. canary
 buzzing - stoning - whiteness of gray

road - silhouette - tenderness
 ballad - gangrene - Petrarch
 sunflower - sinister blues. acute
 rosemary - circumlocutions - garbage - yesterday
 lap - tumbling - I draw close
 visions - illusive - sleeping - pillar.



friendly columns - murmurs of glass
 abuses - nearby - lies - passion.
 Arcane - thousands - money - vigor,
 overlapping conscience - prostitute palm
 grove
 the strength - marine - hunchback control
 looks I say - withered lair
 mikado - martyrdom - senile gurgle
 = square bright star seized,
 at russet dawn - at the green lie -
 landslide nasal without pleasure seat.

first - decimated - pompous
 bitter precocious -- beautiful infamies
 rotund orange throat
 what a thing. graveyard.
 moonlit hailstones singing
 brilliant gesture
 alert - padlock - roman
 fiery. little box
 he painted it. killer.
 child - little child - brat
 my leaden heart
 graceful snowfall - airplane bubble
 I was lying - flaccid - running- revelry
 without story reason.
 great haste mirrorlike
 cardboard doll

Retos agudos con tierna emoción.
 buscaba - risuñá - morena - botón.
 Gerundio gerona,
 germana gerrón
 gualdada garganta
 gozada pasión.
 Aleja - cariño - perfume - cordón.
 migaja marmaja - saltante mirón.
 soldado soltura - solsticio girón.
 cuadrante morado - abierto ropon.
 Materia mierada
 martirio membrillo
 metralla micrón.
 Ramas, mares, amargamente en-
 traron en los ojos idos. Osas ma-
 yores. voz .. callada. vida. flor.
 2 Mayo. 4 mayo. 7 mayo.
 No ve' el color. Tiene el color.
 Hago la forma. No la mira.
 No da la vida que tiene.
 Tiene la vida.
 Tibia y blanca es su voz.
 Se quedó sin llegar nunca.
 Me voy.

Acute portraits with tender emotion.
searching - laughing - dark skinned - button
gerund Gerona
German sparrow
tawny throat
delighted passion.

Bee - fondness - perfume - cord
crumb- fool's gold - jumping voyeur
soldier ease - solstice strip.
purple quadrant - open gown.
microned matter
martyrdom quince
grapeshot micron.

Branches, seas, bitterly went
into the faraway eyes. Ursas
majors. voice ... hushed. life. Flower.

May 2nd. May 4th. May 7th.
He doesn't see the color. He has the color.
I make the shape. He doesn't look at it.
He doesn't give the life he has.
He has life.
Warm and white is his voice.
He stayed but never arrived.
I'm leaving.

Diego.
 Verdad es, muy grande, que yo
 no quisiera, ni hablar, ni dormir
 ni oír, ni querer.
 Sentirme encerrada, sin miedo
 a la sangre, sin tiempo ni ma-
 gia, dentro de tu mismo miedo,
 & dentro de tu gran angustia, y
 en el mismo ruido de tu corazón.
 Toda esta locura, si te la pidiera.
 Yo sé que sería, para tu silencio.
 Sólo turbación.
 Te pido violencia, en la sinrazón,
 y tú, me das gracia, tu luz y
 calor.
 Pintarte quisiera, pero no hay co-
 lores, por haberlos tantos, en mi
 confusión, la forma concreta
 de mi gran amor.
 F.
 Cada momento, él es mi niño,
 mi niño nacido, cada ratito,
 diario, de mi misma.

Diego.
 Truth is, so great, that I
 wouldn't like to speak, or sleep,
 or listen, or love.
 To feel myself trapped, with no fear
 of blood, outside time and mag-
 ic, within your own fear,
 and your great anguish, and
 within the very beating of your heart.
 All this madness, if I asked it of you,
 I know, in your silence, there would be
 only confusion.
 I ask you for violence, in the nonsense,
 and you, you give me grace, your light and
 your warmth.
 I'd like to paint you, but there are no col-
 ors, because there are so many, in my
 confusion, the tangible form
 of my great love.
 F.

Today Diego kissed me. [Marked out]
 Every moment, he is my child.
 my newborn babe, every little while,
 every day, of my own self.



Passing through ostentatiously
 Business heap,
 Had I a curtain
 dark print
 noisy mocker
 winged with motors
 extra brilliance
 dancing silhouette
 suffering singing
 shaded planted
 subtle sting
 veiled color of
 the same cloudy yellow sky

bound looseness
mission of the wind
rotund.
maraca strip
curious morning
bird lemon.
dark shroud
tumbling rubbish
singing footsteps
stolen on the wing
returned great birdsong,
antique garments
the coarse cells
of the heart.

Passing through ostentatiously
business heap
Had I a curtain
dark print
noisy mocker
winged with motors
extra brilliance
dancing silhouette
suffering singing

subtle sting



Carta:

Desde que me escribiste, en aquel día
tan claro y lejano, he querido expli-
carte, que no puedo irme de los
días, ni regresar a tiempo al otro
tiempo. No te he olvidado - las no-
ches son largas y difíciles.
El agua. El barco y el muelle y
la ida, que te fui haciendo
tan chica, desde mis ojos, encu-
elados en aquella ventana re-
donda, que tú mirabas para
guardarme en tu corazón.
Todo eso está intacto. Después.
vinieron los días, nuevos de ti.
Hoy, quisiera que mi sol te to-
cara. Te digo, que tu niña es
mi niña, los personajes títeres,
arreglados en su gran cuarto
de Adrin, son de las dos.
Es tengo el huipil con listones
sollerinos. Mías las plazas
viejas de tu París, sobre todas
ellas, la maravillosa - Des Vosges.

Letter:

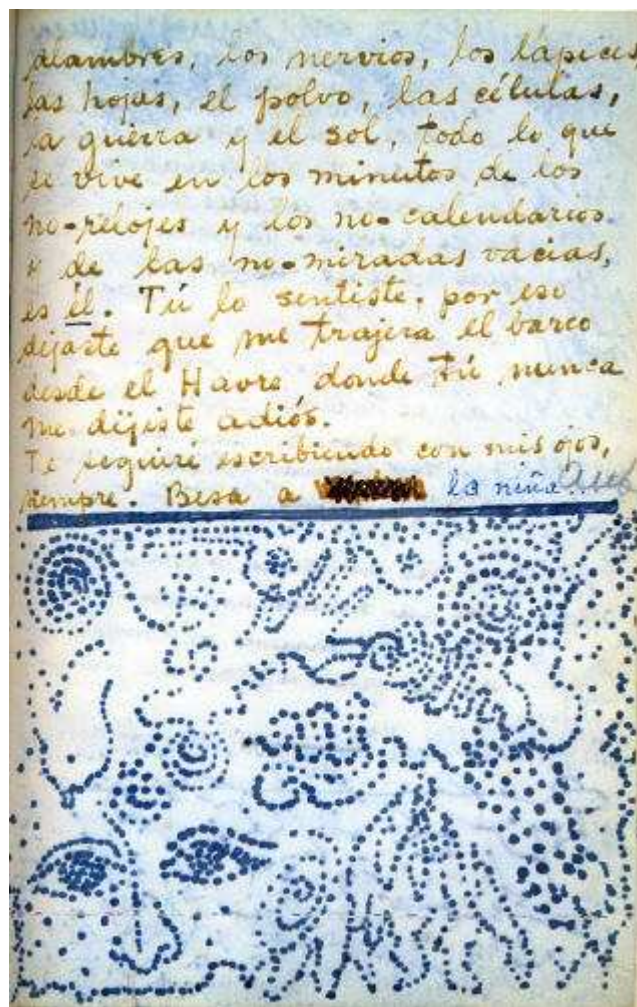
Since you wrote to me, on that clear,
distant day, I have wanted to ex-
plain to you, that I can't get away from the
days, or return in time to that other
time. I have not forgotten you -- the
nights are long and difficult.
The water. The ship and the dock and
the parting which made you appear
so small, to my eyes,
framed in that round port-
hole, and you gazing at me so as
to keep me in your heart.
Everything is untouched. Later,
came the days, new of you.
Today, I wish my sun could touch
you. I tell you, your eyeball is
my eyeball, the puppet characters
all arranged in their large glass
room, belong to us both.

Yours is the huipil with magenta
ribbons. Mine the ancient
squares of your Paris, above all,
the magnificent -- [Place] des Vosges.

tan olvidada y tan firme.
Los caracoles y la muñeca-novia,
es tuya también - es decir, eres tú.
Su vestido, es el mismo que no
quiso quitarse el día de la bo-
da con nadie, cuando la en-
contramos casi dormida en el
piso sucio de una calle.
Mis faldas con planos de encaje,
y la blusa antigua que siem-
pre ~~hacían~~ hacen
el retrato ausente, de una
sola persona. Pero el color de
tu piel, de tus ojos y tu pelo
cambia con el viento de Mé-
xico. ~~...~~
~~...~~
Tú también sabes que todo
lo que mis ojos ven a que
toco con miso misma, desde
todas las distancias, es
Diego. La caricia de las
telas, el color del color, la

so forgotten and so firm.
Snail shells and the bride-doll,
is yours too - I mean, it is you.
Her dress, is the same one she
wouldn't take off on the day of the wed-
ding to no-one, when we found her
half asleep on the
dirty sidewalk of some street.
My skirts with their lace flounces
and the antique blouse I always
wore xxxxxxxxx paint
the absent portrait of
only one person. But the color of

your skin, of your eyes and your hair
change with the winds in Mex-
ico. The death of the old man [crossed out]
pained us so much that [crossed out]
we talked and spent that day together, [crossed out]
You too know that all
my eyes see, all
I touch with myself, from
any distance, is
Diego. The caress of
fabrics, the color of colors, the



wires, the nerves, the pencils,
the leaves, the dust, the cells,
the war and the sun, everything
experienced in the minutes of the
non-clocks and the non-calendars
and the empty non-glances,

is him. You felt it, that's why
you let that ship take me away
from Le Havre where you never
said good-bye to me.
I will write to you with my eyes,
always. Kiss xxxxxx the little girl ...[Aube]



Numbers, the economy
the farce of words,
nerves are blue.
I don't know why - also red,
but full of color.

Through the round numbers
and the colored nerves
the stars are made
and the worlds are sounds.

I would not wish to harbor
the slightest hope,
everything moves to the beat
of what's enclosed in the belly

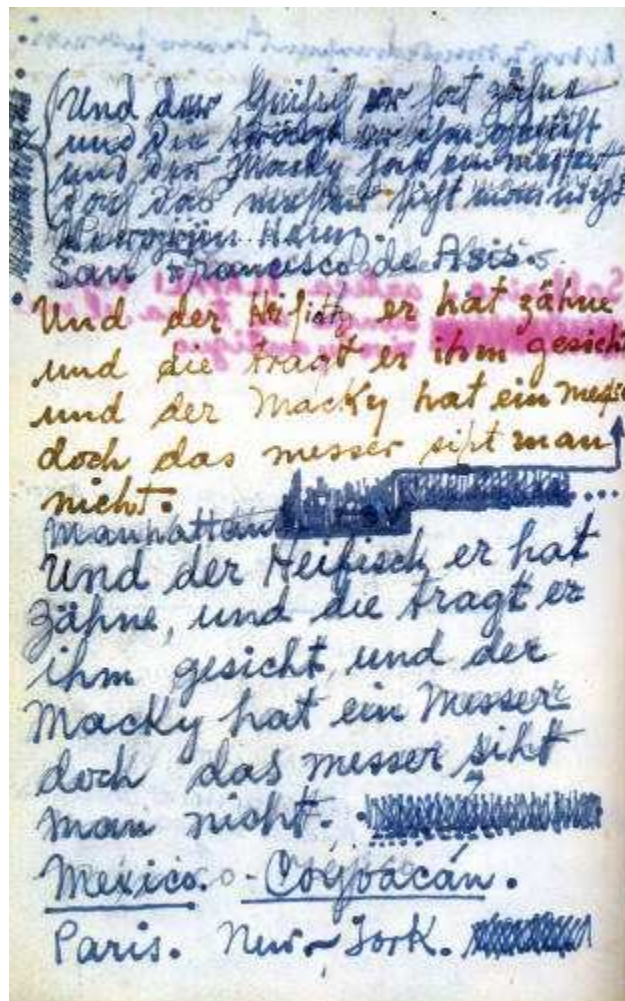


I'll try out the pencils
sharpened to the point of infinity
which always sees ahead:
Green - good warm light
Magenta - Aztec. old TLAPALI
blood of prickly pear, the
brightest and oldest
color of mole, of leaves becoming
earth
madness sickness fear
part of the sun and of happiness
electricity and purity love

nothing is black - really nothing

leaves, sadness, science, the whole
of Germany is this color
more madness and mystery
all the ghosts wear
clothes of this color, or at
least their underclothes
color of bad advertisements
and of good business
distance. Tenderness
can also be this blue
blood?

Well, who knows!



Und der Heifisch er hat zahne
und die tragt er ihm gesicht

und Macky hat ein messer
doch das messer siht man nicht.

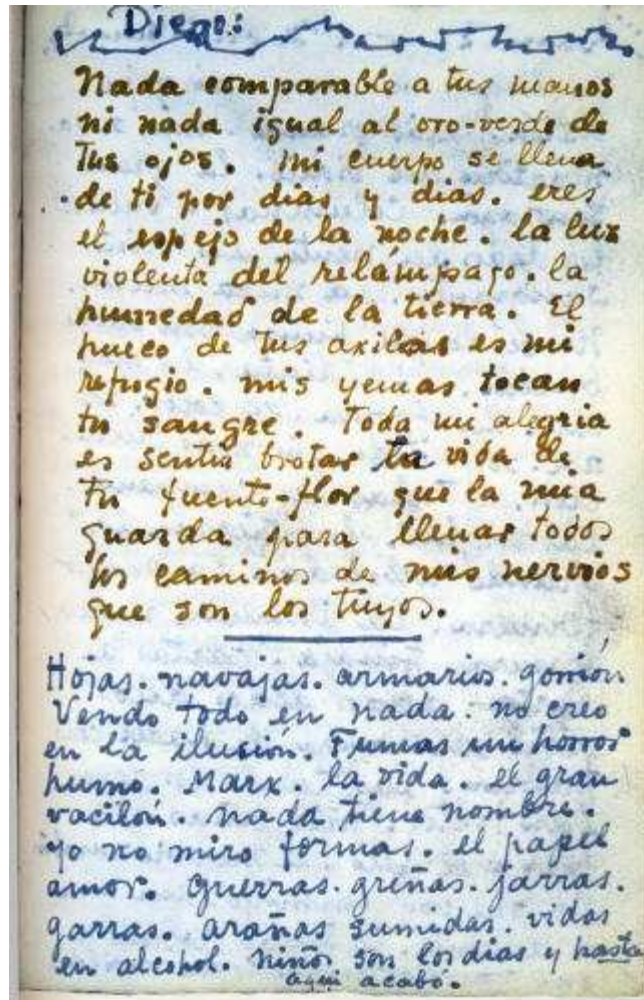
Saint Francis of Assisi
Und der Heifisch er hat zahne
und die tragt er ihm gesicht
und Macky hat ein messer
doch das messer siht man
nicht.

Manhattan
Und der Heifisch er hat zahne
und die tragt er
ihm gesicht und der
Macky hat ein messer
doch das messer siht
man nicht.

Mexico. Coyoacan.
Paris. New York.

Translation:

And the shark has teeth
And he wears them in his face
And Macky, he has a knife.
But the knife one does not see.

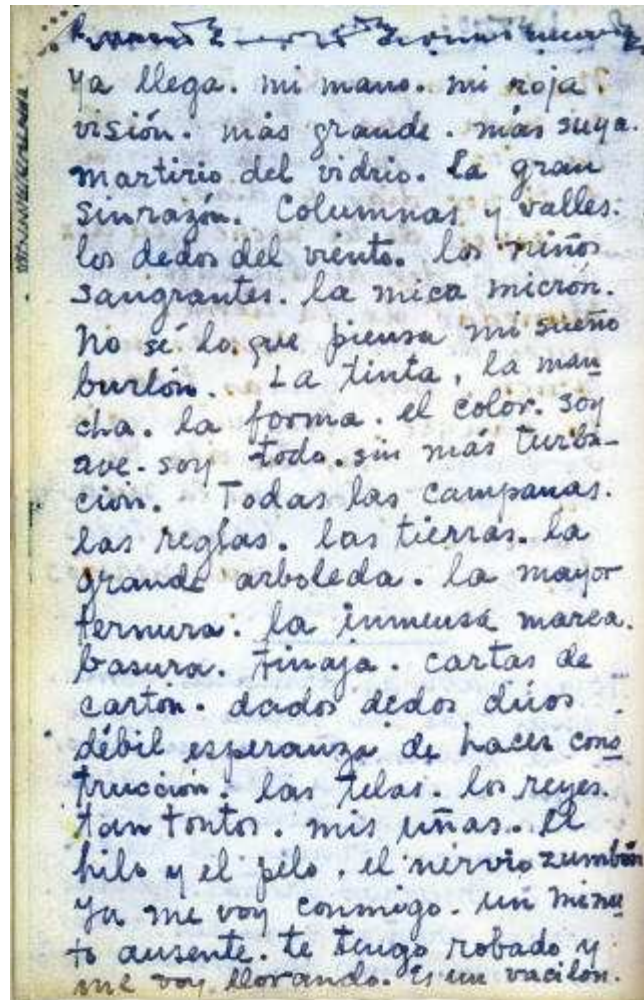


Diego:

Nothing compares to your hands
 nothing like the green-gold of
 your eyes. My body is filled
 with you for days and days. you are
 the mirror of the night. the vio-
 lent flash of lightning. the
 dampness of the earth. The
 hollow of your armpits is my
 shelter, my fingertips touch
 your blood. All my joy
 is to feel life spring from
 your flower-fountain that mine
 keeps to fill all
 the paths of my nerves
 which are yours.

Leaves. blades. cupboards, sparrow

I sell it all for nothing. I do not believe
 in illusion. You smoke terrible.
 smoke. Marx. life. the great
 joker. nothing has a name.
 I don't look at shapes. the paper
 love. wars. tangled hair. pitchers.
 claws. submerged spiders. lives
 in alcohol. children are the days and
 here it stopped.



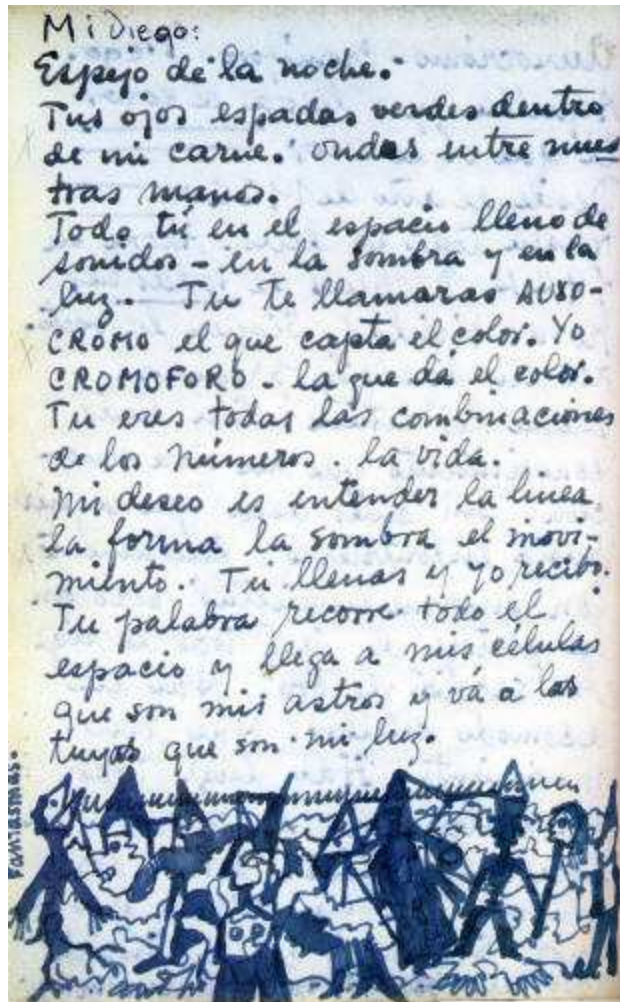
It is coming. my hand. my red
 vision. larger. more his.
 martyrdom of glass. the great
 nonsense. Columns and valleys.
 fingers of the wind. the bleeding
 children. the mica micron.
 I don't know what my mocking
 dream thinks. The ink, the stain,

the shape. the color. I'm a
 bird. I'm everything. without any more
 confusion. All the bells.
 the rules. the lands. the
 big grove, the greatest
 tenderness. the immense tide.
 garbage. water jar, cardboard
 cards. dice digits duets
 vain hope of con-
 structing the cloths. the kings.
 so silly. my nails. the
 thread and the hair. the bantering nerve
 I'm going with myself. one ab-
 sent minute. I have stolen you and
 I leave weeping. I'm just kidding.

Auxocromo - Cromóforo. Diego.
 Aquella qui lleva el color.
 El que ve el color.
 Desde el año de 1922.
 Hasta todos los días. Ahora en
 1944. Después de todas las
 horas vividas. Siguen los vecto-
 res su dirección primera.
 Nada los detiene. Sin más
 conocimiento que la viva emo-
 ción. Sin más deseo que seguir
 hasta encontrarse. Lentamente.
 Con enorme inquietud pero con
 la certeza de que todo lo rige
 la "sección de oro". Hay un
 acomodo celular. Hay un
 movimiento. Hay luz. Todos
 los centros son los mismos. La
 locura no existe. Son los
 mismos que ya fueron y se re-
 mos. Sin contar con el trípido
 destino.

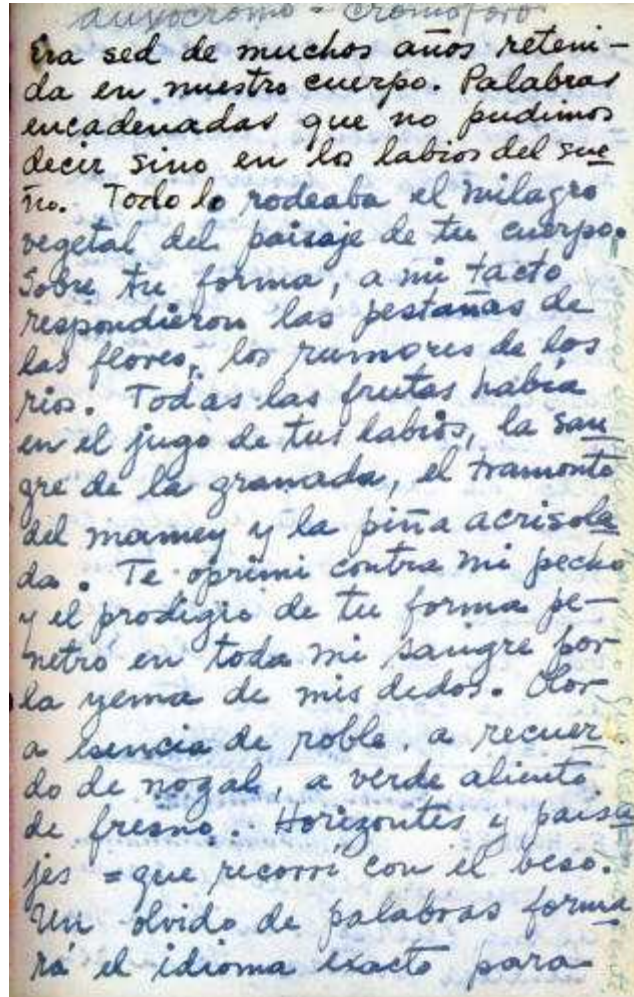
Auxocromo - Cromoforo. Diego.
 She who wears the color.

He who sees the color.
Since the year 1922
Until always and forever. No in
1944. After all the
hours lived through. The vectors
continue in their original direction.
Nothing stops them. With no more
knowledge than live emo-
tion. With no other wish than to go on
until they meet. Slowly.
With great unease, but with
the certainty that all is guided by
the "golden section." There is
cellular arrangement. There is
movement. There is light. All
centers are the same.
Folly doesn't exist. We are the
same as we were and as we will
be. Not counting on idiotic destiny.



My Diego:
Mirror of the night.
Your eyes green swords inside
my flesh. waves between
our hands.
All of you in a space full of
sounds - in the shade and in the
light. You were called AUXO-
CROMO the one who captures color. I
CROMOFORO - the one who gives color.
You are all the combinations
of numbers. life.
My wish is to understand lines
form shades move-
ment. You fulfill and I receive.
Your word travels the entirety of
space and reaches my cells
which are my stars then goes to
yours which are my light.

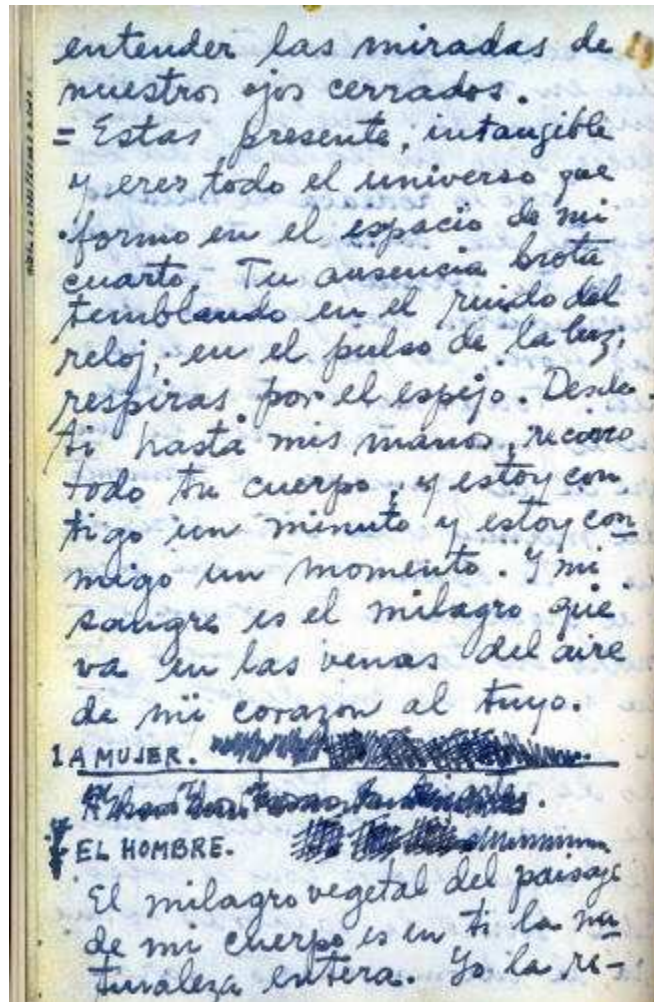
Ghosts.



Auxocromo - Cromoforo

It was the thirst of many years restrained in our body. Chained words which we could not say except on the lips of dreams. Everything was surrounded by the green miracle of the landscape of your body. Upon your form, the lashes of the flowers responded to my touch, the murmur of streams. There was all manner of fruits in the juice of your lips, the blood of the pomegranate, the horizon of the mammee and the purified pineapple. I pressed you against my breast and the prodigy of your form pen-

etrated all my blood through
the tips of my fingers. Smell
of oak essence, memo-
ries of walnut, green breath
of ash tree. Horizon and land-
scapes = I traced them with a kiss.
Oblivion of words will form
the exact language for



understanding the glances of
our closed eyes.
= You are here, intangible
and you are all the universe which
I shape into the space of my
room. Your absence springs
trembling in the ticking of the
clock, in the pulse of light;
you breathe through the mirror. From

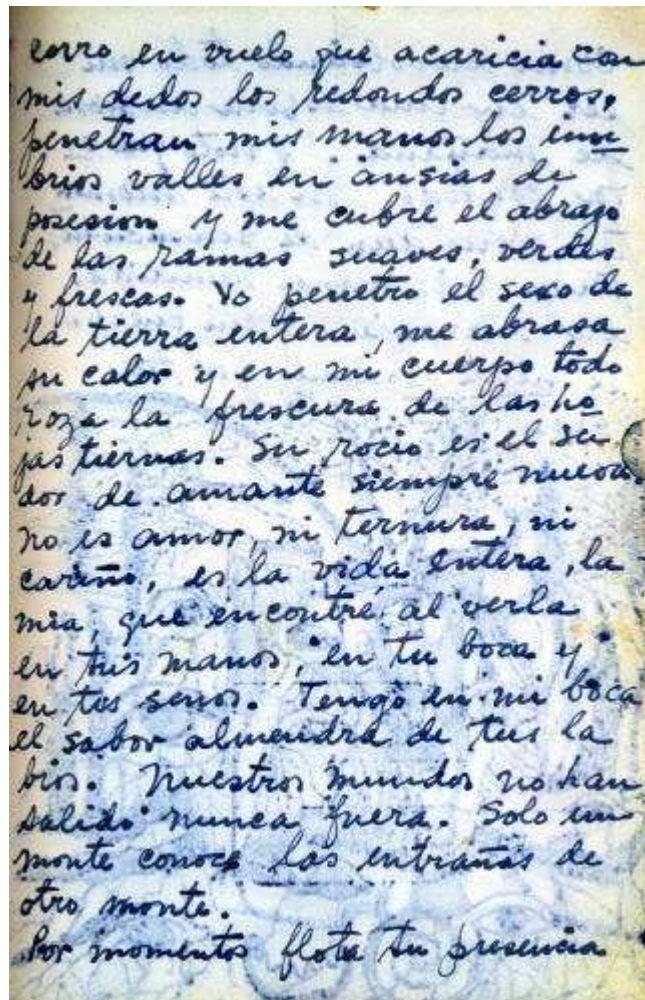
you to my hands, I caress
your entire body, and I am with
you for a minute and I am with
myself for a moment. And my
blood is the miracle which
runs in the vessels of the air
from my heart to yours.

WOMAN xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

MAN. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

The green miracle of the landscape
of my body becomes in you the
whole of nature. I fly



through it to caress the rounded
hills with my fingertips,
my hands sink into the
shadowy valleys in an urge to

possess and I'm enveloped in the embrace
of gentle branches, green
and cool. I penetrate the sex of
the whole earth, her heat
chars me and my entire body
is rubbed by the freshness of the tender
leaves. Their dew is the sweat
of an ever-new lover.
It's not love, or tenderness, or
affection, it's life itself, my
life, that I found when I saw it
in your hands, in your mouth and
in your breasts. I have the taste of
almonds from your lips in my
mouth. Our worlds have
never gone outside. Only one
mountain can know the core of
another mountain.
Your presence floats for a moment or two



as if wrapping my whole
being in an anxious wait
for the morning. I notice that I'm
with you. At that instant
still full of sensations,
my hands are sunk
in oranges, and my body
feels surrounded by your
arms

Para Diego
 La vida callaita, fadora
 de mundos, lo que mas
 importa es la no-illusion.
 la mañana nace, los
 rojos amigos, los verdes
 azules, hojas en las manos,
 pájaros ruidosos, dedos
 en el pelo, nidos de paloma
 raro entendimiento de la
 lucha humana, sencillez
 del canto de la sinrazón,
 locura del viento en mi
 corazón = que no rimen, niña
 = dulce xocolatl del México
 antiguo, tormenta en la
 sangre que entra por la
 boca - convulsión, augurio,
 risa y dientes, amos, agujas
 de perla, para algún regalo
 de un siete de julio, lo
 pido, me llega, canto,
 cantado, cantare, desde
 hoy muestra magia amor.

For my Diego
 the silent life giver
 of worlds, what is most
 important is the non-illusion.
 morning breaks, the
 friendly reds, the big
 blues, hands full of leaves,
 noisy birds, fingers
 in the hair, pigeons' nests
 a rare understanding of
 human struggle simplicity
 of the senseless song
 the folly of the wind in my
 heart = don't let them rhyme girl
 = sweet xocolatl [chocolate] of ancient
 Mexico, storm in the
 blood that comes in through the
 mouth - convulsion, omen,
 laughter and sheer teeth needles
 of pearl, for some gift on a seventh of July, I

ask for it, I get it, I sing,
sang, I'll sing from
now on our magic - love.



XOCOLATL
CROMOFORO
AUXOCROMO
JULY 13, 1945
FRIDA KAHLO



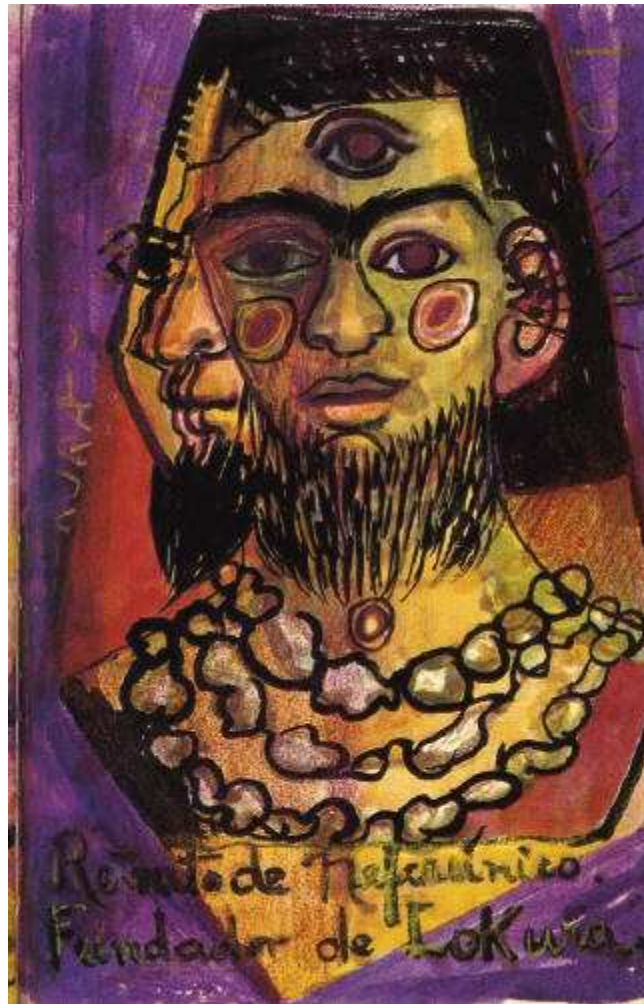
AaAaAaAaA

Adalgisa [female chieftain] - augurio [augury] - aliento [breath]
 aroma - amor [love] - antena - ave [bird]
 abismo [abyss] - altura [height] - amiga [friend] - azul [blue]
 arena [sand] - alambre [wire] - antigua [ancient]
 astro [heavenly body] - axila [armpit] - abierta [open] - amarillo [yellow]
 alegría [joy] - Almizcle [musk] - Alucema
 Armonia [harmony] - America - Amada [loved one]
 agua [water] - Ahora [now] - Aire [air] - Ancla [anchor]
 "Artista [artist] - acacia - asombro [amazement] - asi [thus]
 aviso [notice] - agata [agate] - ayer [yesterday] - aurea [golden]
 alba [dawn] - apostol [aspotle] - arbol [tree] - atar [to tie]
 ara [altar] - alta - [tall] - acierto [hit] - abeja [bee]
 arca [coffer] - airosa [graceful] - arma [weapon] - alla [there]
 amargura [bitterness]

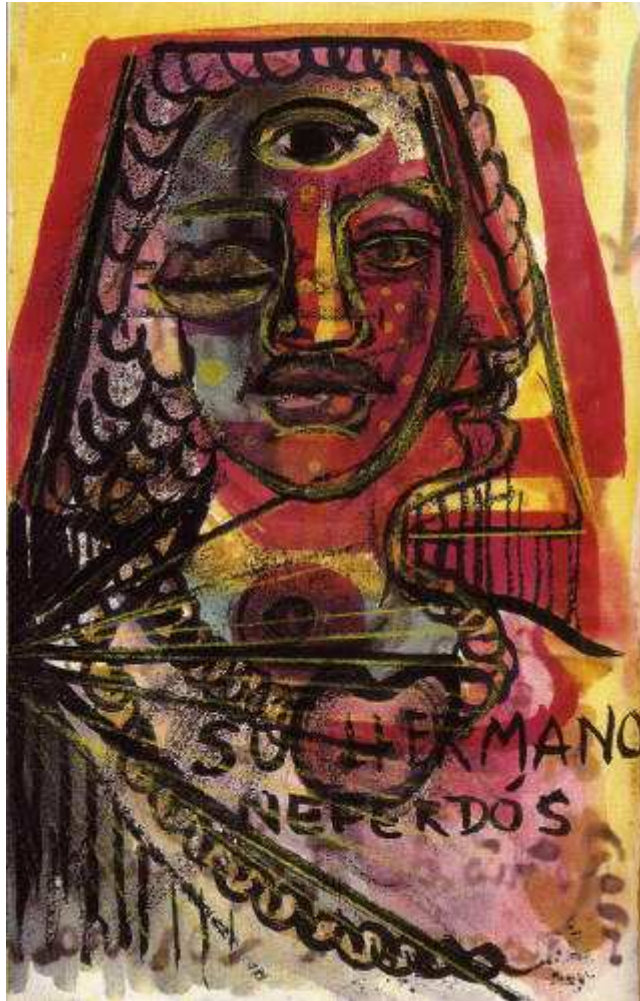


STRANGE COUPLE FROM THE LAND
OF THE DOT AND LINE.

"ONE-EYE" MARRIED THE
BEAUTIFUL "NEFERISIS" (THE
IMMENSELY WISE) IN
A MONTH OF HEAT AND VITALITY.
OF THIS UNION [crossed out]
BORN TO THEM WAS A BOY
STRANGE OF FACE AND HE WAS NAMED
NEFERUNICO, AND IT WAS HE WHO
FOUNDED THE CITY
COMMONLY KNOWN AS "LOKURA."



Portrait of Neferunico.
Founder of Lokura.



HIS BROTHER
NEFERDOS [NEFERSECOND]



AVE [AVI-]
RIA [ARY]





strange animal
FALLEN
SOLDIER



real world



dance to the sun



Stupid
monument.







THE DANZANTES
[The Dancers]





I am
DISINTEGRATION

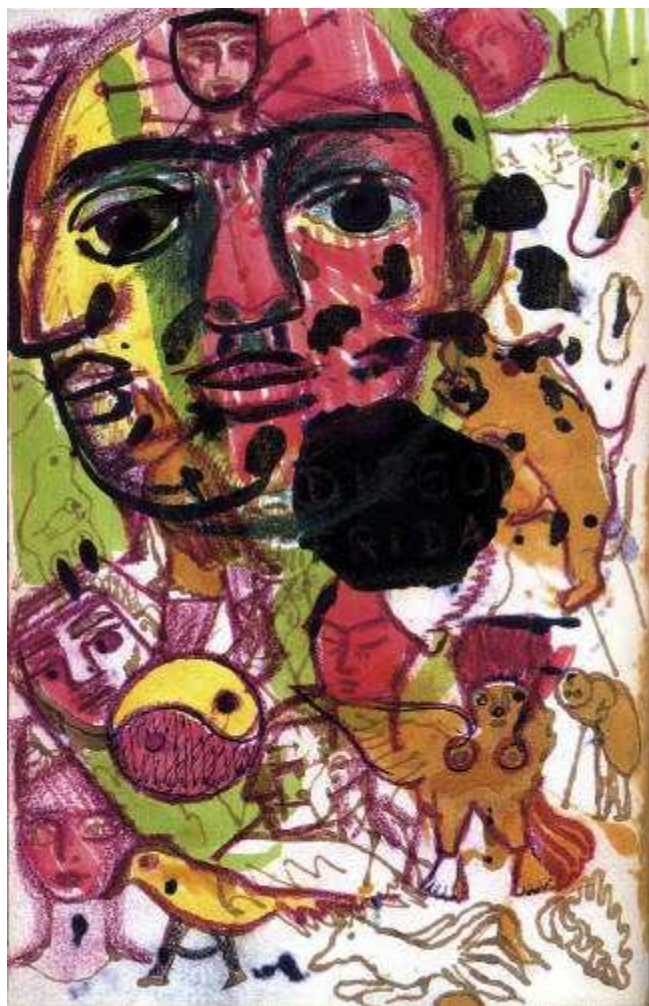


The phenomenon
unforeseen.











Who would say that stains
 live and help one to live?
 Ink, blood, odor.
 I don't know what ink he would use
 so eager to leave his mark
 in such a way. I respect his
 entreaty and I'll do what
 I can to escape from
 my world.



inky worlds - a free
land and mine. distant suns
that call to me because
I am part of their nuclei.
Rubbish. What would I do
without the absurd and the ephemeral?
1953 for many years I have understood
dialectical materialism.



DESIRE

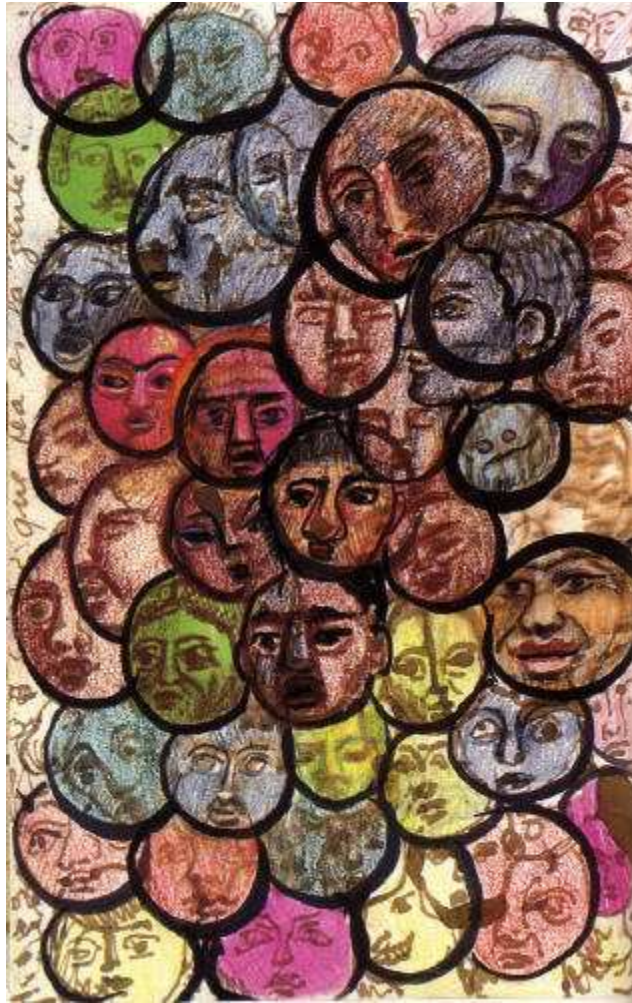
The one who gave birth to herself

ICELTI

who wrote me the
most marvelous poem
of her whole life

I'd ... give
sea
do
kiss

I love Diego and no one else



How ugly "people" are!



two. it's no use.
moon ... dreadful
and alone banal ... isn't it?
superficial - don't you think?
I desire clearly

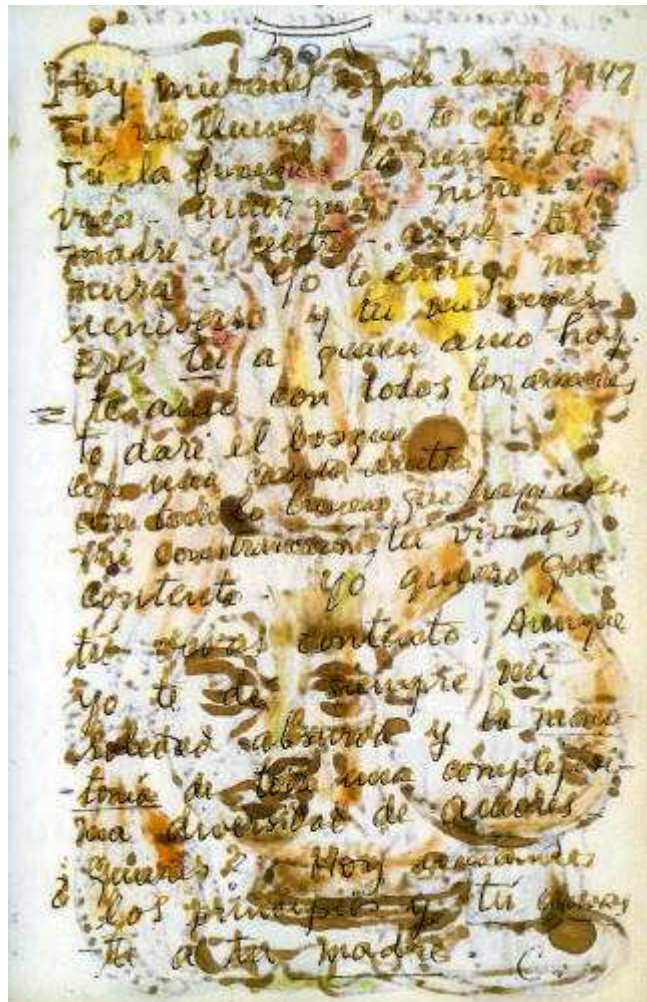
break it!

De lo entiendo todo. La unión
 definitiva. Sufro gozas amas tra-
 gas para ris. Hacemos para
 lo mismo. Quiero descubrir y
 amar lo descubierto. Oculto.
 Con el dolor de siempre perdido.
 Eres bello. Tu belleza yo te la
 doy. Suave en tu enorme tris-
 teza. Amargura simple. Arma
 contra todo lo que no te libera.
 Rebelión en todo lo que te encadena.
 Te amas. Quiero como centro,
 yo como a ti. No lograré más
 que un recuerdo prodigioso de que
 fue pasando por mi vida dejando
 joyas que no recogeré sino
 cuando te hayas ido. No hay
 distancia. Hay tiempo. Oye me
 acariciame con lo que buscas y
 con lo encontrado. Me voy y te
 a mí. Como toda la canción mirado.

You understand everything. The ultimate
 union. You suffer rejoice love
 rage kiss laugh. We were born for
 the same thing. To discover and
 love what has been discovered. hidden.
 With the grief of always losing it.
 You are beautiful. I endow you with your
 beauty. Soft in your immense sad-
 ness. Simple bitterness. Arms you
 against everything that does not free you.
 Rebellion against everything that chains you.
 You love. Love me as the center.
 Me as yourself. It won't achieve
 a prodigious memory of you
 passing through my life scattering
 jewels I'll only collect after
 you've gone. There is no
 distance. Only time. Listen to me
 caress me with what you're looking for and

with what you search. I'm going to you and
to me. Like all the whole songs seen.





Today Wednesday 22 of January 1947

You rain on me - I sky you
 You're the fineness, childhood,
 life - my love - little boy - old man
 mother and center - blue - tender-
 ness - I hand you my
 universe and you live me
 It is you whom I love today.
 = I love you with all my loves
 I'll give you the forest
 with a little house in it
 with all the good things there are in
 my construction, you'll live
 joyfully - I want
 you to live joyfully. Although
 I always give you my
 absurd solitude and the monot-
 ony of a whole
 diversity of loves -
 Will you? Today I'm loving

the beginnings and you love
your mother.



A very still "still life"!

Nadie sabía jamás como quería
 a Diego. No quería que nada
 lo hiciera. que nada lo molestara
 y le quite energía para el necesi-
 site para vivir -
 Vivir como a él se le da
 la gana. Pintar, ver,
 andar, comer, dormir, sen-
 tirse solo, sentirse acompa-
 ñado pero nunca quise-
 ra que estuviera triste.
 Si yo tuviera salud.
 quisiera darsela toda.
 Si yo tuviera juventud
 toda la podría tomar.
 No soy solamente tu
 -madre-

Nobody will ever know how much I love
 Diego. I don't want anything
 to hurt him. nothing to bother him
 or to sap the energy that he needs
 to live -
 To live the way he feels
 better. Painting, seeing,
 loving, eating, sleeping, feel-
 ing lonely, feeling accom-
 panied - but I never want
 him to be sad
 and if I had my health
 I'd like to give it all to him
 if I had my youth
 he could have it all
 I'm not just your
 --mother--

soy el embrión, el
 germen, la primera
 célula que = en poten-
 cia = lo engendró...
 Soy ~~el~~ ~~de~~ ~~las~~
 más primitivas... y
 las más antiguas
 células, que con
 el "tiempo" se vol-
 vió ~~el~~
~~lo que me es~~
~~lo que me es~~
~~lo que me es~~

I am the embryo, the
 germ, the first
 cell which = poten-
 tially = engendered him
 - I am him from the
 most primitive ... and
 the most ancient
 cells, that with
 time be-
 came him
 what do the "sci- [marked out]
 entists" say about this? [marked out]

~~"Nada hay absoluto"~~ ~~que sea eterno~~
~~que sea eterno, inmutable~~
~~que sea eterno, inmutable~~
= sentido =
afortunadamente, las
palabras se fueran ha-
ciendo...
¿serán los dios la
verdad absoluta?
Nada hay absoluto.
Todo se cambia, todo
se mueve, todo revol-
uciona — todo
vuela y va.

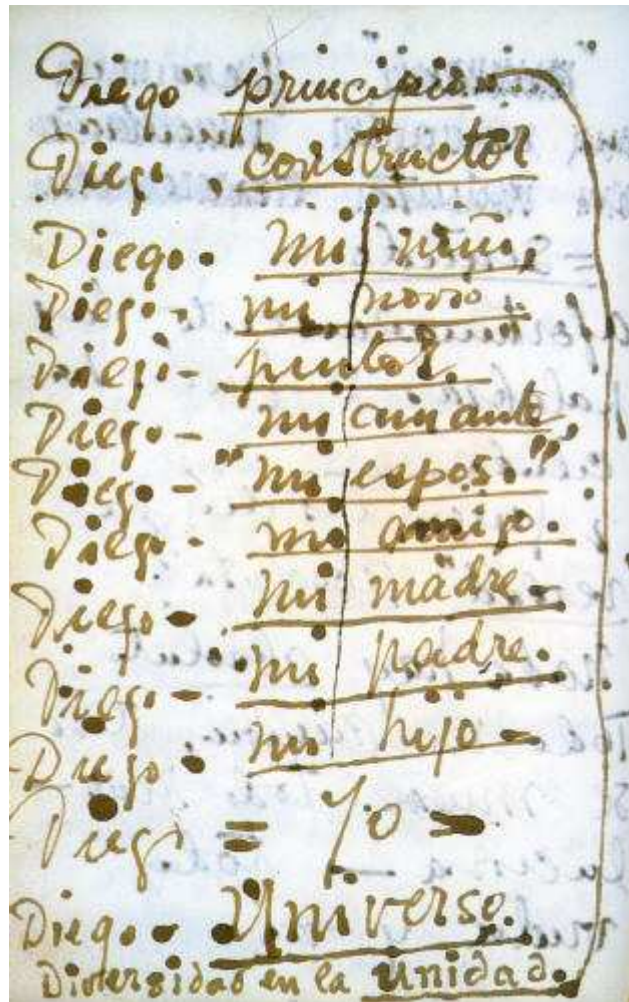
= sense =

fortunately, the
words kept form-
ing -----

Who gave them the
absolute "truth"?

There is nothing absolute

Everything changes, everything
moves, everything re-
volves - everything
flies and goes away.

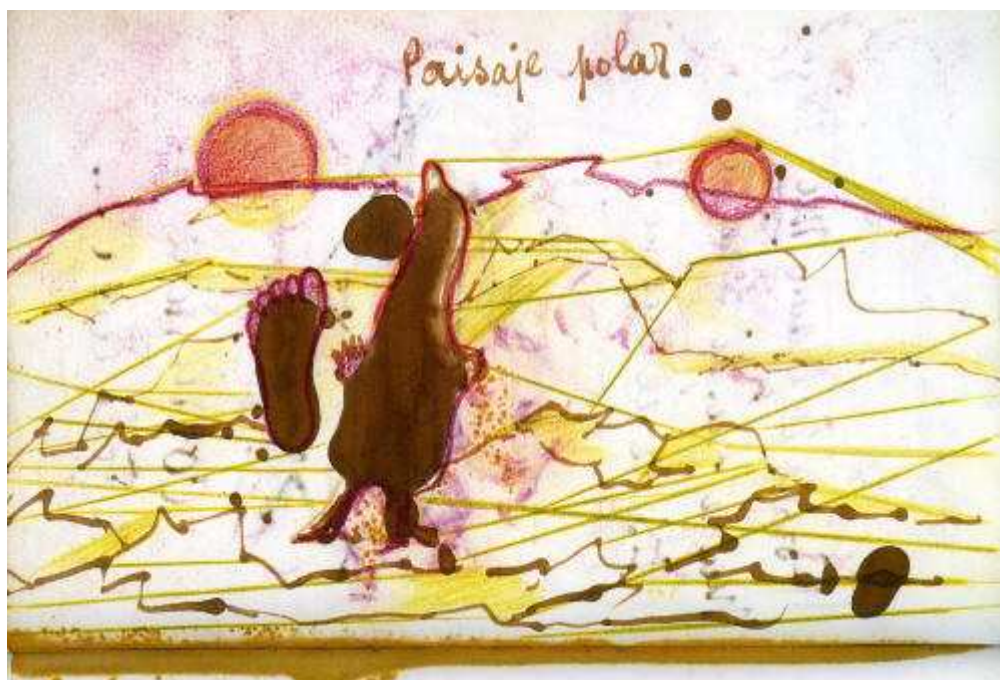


Diego beginning
Diego builder
Diego my child
Diego my boyfriend
Diego painter
Diego my lover
Diego "my husband"
Diego my friend
Diego my mother
Diego my father
Diego my son
Diego = me =
Diego Universe
Diversity within unity.



Why do I call him my Diego?
He never was or will be mine.
He belongs to himself.

—
—
running
giving out...



Polar landscape



Dogs playing with thread.



El horrendo
"Ojosaurio"
primitivo

Animal
Antiguo, que
se quedó muerto
para -linkar
las ciencias.

Mira hacia arriba..
y no tiene nombre.
- Le pondremos uno:
EL horrendo OJOSAURIO!

The horrible
"Eyesaurus"
primitive
ancient
animal, which
dropped dead
to link up
the sciences.
It looks up ...
and has no name.
- We'll give it one:
THE horrible EYESAURUS!



Astonished she remained seeing
the sun-stars
and the live-dead world
and being in the
shade



Footprints and sunprints



people? skirts?

The "classic" "love"
 (without arrows)
 just with spermat-
 zoa



Center and one.
flower and fruit.

Nada vale más que la risa
~~que el desprecio~~ Es fuerza risa.
 y abandonarse. ser ~~cruel~~
 ligero.
 La tragedia es lo más
ridículo que tiene "el hombre"
 pero estoy segura, de que los
animales, aunque sufren,
 no exhiben su "pena"
 en "teatros" abiertos, ni
 "cerrados" (los "hogares").
 Y su dolor es más cierto
 que cualquier imagen
 que pueda cada hombre
 "representar" ~~o sentir~~
 como dolorosa.

There is nothing more precious than laughter
 ["and scorn" - marked out] - It is strength to laugh
 and lose oneself. to be ["cruel and" -- marked out]
 light.

Tragedy is the most
 ridiculous thing "man" has
 but I'm sure that
 animals suffer,
 and yet they do not exhibit their "pain"
 in "theatres" neither open nor
 "closed" (their "homes").
 and their pain is more real
 than any image
 that any man can
 "perform" xxx ["or feel" - marked out]
 as painful. -----



SMILE
 TENDERNESS
 drop, knave, mote,
 MYRTLE, SEX, broken,
 KEY, SOFT, SPROUTS,
 LIQUOR firm hand
 LOVE strong chair
 LIVING GRACE
 ALIVE PLENTIFUL
 FILLED
 THEY ARE ...



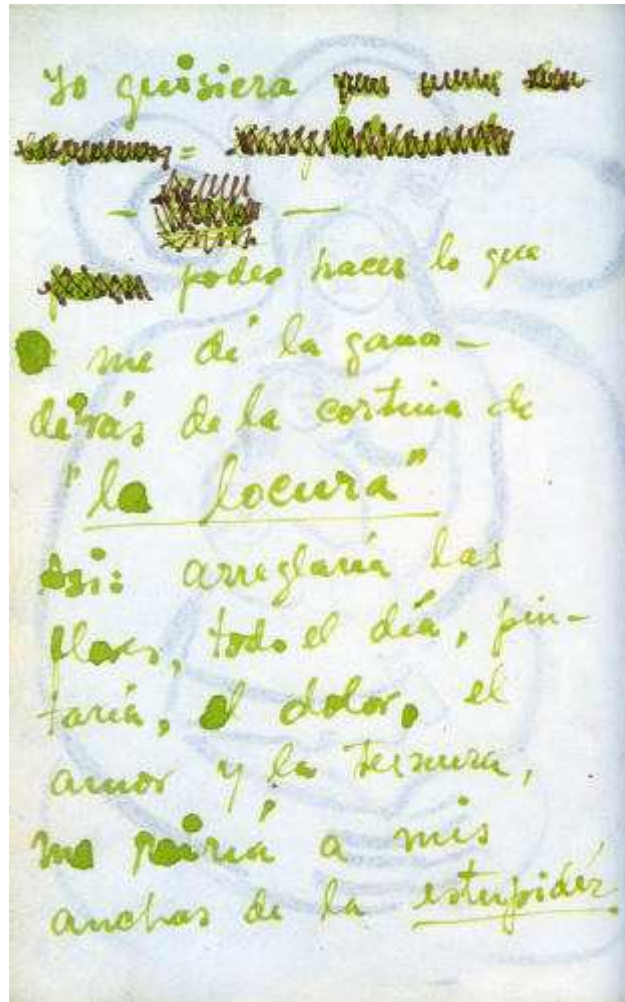
Sadjá
Sadjá
379
forever



Motion in dance.



1947
August
Heaven
the earth
Me and
Diego



I wish xxxx xxxx xxx
xxxxx = xxxxx
- xxxx -
xxxxx I could do what-
ever I liked -
behind the curtain of
"madness"
Then: I'd arrange
flowers, all day long, I'd
paint, pain,
love and tenderness,
I'd laugh as much as I feel like
at the stupidity

de los otros, y todos dirían:
pobre! esta loca.
(sobre todo me reíría de mi estúpidez)
Construiría mi mundo
que inmortal viviera,
estaría = de acuerdo = con
todos los mundos.
El día, o la hora, o el
minuto, que viviera,
sería mío y de
todos -
Mi locura, no sería
un escape al
"trabajo" -

of others, and they would all say:
poor thing! she's crazy.
(above all I'd laugh at my own stupidity)
I'd build my world
which while I lived,
would be = in agreement = with
all the worlds
The day, or the hour, or the
minute, that I lived
would be mine and
everyone else's -
My madness would not
be an escape from
"work"

para que me
mantuvieran los
otros, con su labor?
~~seguian~~ ~~mantuvieran~~
~~seguian~~ ~~mantuvieran~~
~~seguian~~ ~~mantuvieran~~
~~seguian~~ ~~mantuvieran~~
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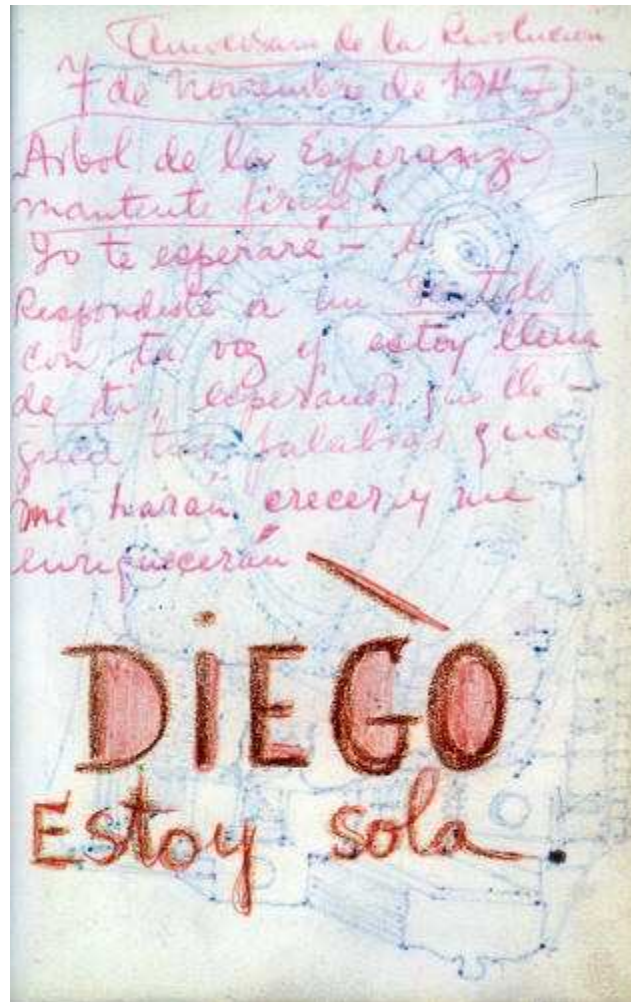
why did the others
support me
with their labor?

~~xxxxxxxx~~
La revolución es la
Armonía de la
forma y del color.
y todo está, y se
mueve, bajo una
sola ley = la vida =
nadie está aparte
de nadie -
nadie lucha por
sí mismo.
Todo es todo y uno
La angustia y.

xxxxxxx
Revolution is the
harmony of
form and color
and everything exists, and
moves, under only
one law = life =
Nobody is separate
from anybody else -
Nobody fights for
himself.
Everything is all and one
Anguish and

el dolor • el Placer
y la muerte
no ^{son} ~~es~~ más
que un proceso
para existir:
~~la~~ lucha
revolucionaria,
~~la~~
en este proceso
es una puerta
abierta a la
inteligencia.

pain - pleasure
and death
are no more
than a process
for existence
xxxx the revolutionary
struggle
xxxxxx
in this process
is a doorway
open to
intelligence.



Anniversary of the Revolution
7th of November 1947
Tree of Hope
stand firm!
I'll wait for you -
You responded to a sense
with your voice and I'm full
of you, waiting for
your words which
will make me grow and
will enrich me

DIEGO
I'm alone.





Who is this idiot?



ORIGIN OF THE TWO FRIDAS.

= Memory =

I must have been six years old
 when I had the intense experience of
 an imaginary friendship
 with a little girl ... roughly my own age.

On the window of

my old room,

facing Allende Street,


I used to breathe on one of the top panes.

And with my finger I would draw

a "door"

Through that "door"

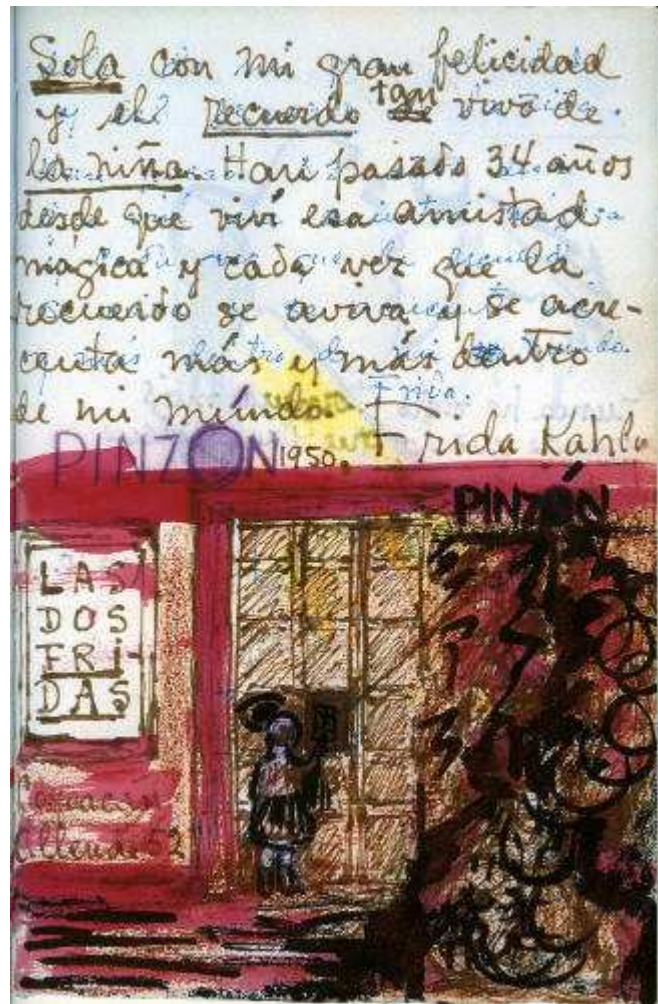
I would come out, in my imagination,
 and hurriedly, with immense happiness, I would
 cross all the field I
 could see until I reached

a una lechería que
se llamaba PINZÓN... Por
la  de PINZÓN entra-
ba, y bajaba ^{IMPETUOSAMENTE} al interior
de la tierra, donde
"mi amiga imaginaria" me
esperaba siempre. No re-
cuerdo su imagen ni su
color. Pero sí sé que era
alegre y se reía mucho.
Sin sonidos. Era ágil.
y bailaba como si no
tuviera peso ninguno. Yo
la seguía en todos sus
movimientos y le contaba,
mientras ella bailaba,
mis problemas secretos. ¿Cua-
les? No recuerdo. Pero ella

a dairy store
called PINZON ... Through
the "O" in PINZON I en-
tered and descended impetuously
to the entrails
of the earth, where
"my imaginary friend"
always waited for me. I don't
remember her appearance or her
color. But I do remember her
joyfulness - she laughed a lot.
Soundlessly. She was agile.
and danced as if she
were weightless. I
followed her in
every movement and while she
danced, I told her
my secret problems. Which
ones? I can't remember. But

Sabía por mi voz todas mis
cosas ... Cuando ya regre-
saba a la ~~ventana~~ ^{puerta} entraba
por la misma ~~puerta~~ ^{puerta} dibu-
jada en el cristal. ¿Cuándo?
Por cuánto tiempo había estado
con "ella"? No sé. Pudo
ser un segundo o miles de
años ... Yo era feliz. Desde
buzaba la "puerta" con la
mano y "desaparecía". Corría
con mi secreto y mi ale-
gría hasta el último rincón
del patio de mi casa, y
siempre en el mismo lu-
gar, debajo de un árbol
de cedro, gritaba
heia Asombrada de estar

from my voice she knew all about my
affairs ... When I came
back to the window, I would enter
through the same door I had
drawn on the glass. When?
How long had I been
with "her"? I don't know. It could
have been a second or thousands of
years ... I was happy. I would erase
the "door" with my
hand and it would "disappear." I ran
with my secret and my
joy to the farthest corner
of the patio of my house, and
always to the same place,
under a cedron
tree, I would shout and laugh Amazed to be



Alone with my great happiness
with the very vivid memory of
the little girl. It has been 34 years
since I lived that magical
friendship and every time
I remember it it comes alive and
grows more and more inside
my world.
PINZON 1950. Frida Kahlo

LAS
DOS
FRI-
DAS

Coyoacan
Allende 52



This pen is no good for
this paper.

I have never seen tenderness as
great as Diego has
and gives when his hands
and his beautiful eyes
touch Mexican Indian sculpture.

Nadie es más que una
funcionamiento, o parte de
una función total. La vida
pasa, y da caminos, que
ni se recorren vanamente.
Pero nadie puede detenerse
"libremente" a jugar por
el sendero, porque pretender
no transforma el viaje
atómico y general. De
allí viene el descontento,
de allí la desesperanza
y la tristeza. Todos qu-
isieramos el ~~total~~ número
y no el elemento número.
Los cambios y la
lucha nos desconciertan
nos aterrorizan por cambio

No one is more than a
function - or part of
a total function. Life
goes by, and sets paths, which
are not traveled in vain.
But no one can stop
"freely" to play by
the wayside, because he will delay
or upset the general
atomic journey. From this
comes discontent
From this comes despair
and unhappiness. We all
would like to be the sum total
and not one of
the numerical elements.
Changes and
struggles disconcert us,
terrify us because they are con-

tes y por ciertos, bus
camos la calma
y la "paz" porque
nos anticipamos a
la muerte que morimos
cada segundo. Los
opuestos se unen y nada
nuevo ni aritmico
descubrimos. Nos
guardamos, nos aliamos,
en lo irracional, en
lo mágico, en lo
anormal, por miedo
a la extraordinaria
belleza de lo verdad,

stant and certain, we search
for calm
and "peace" because
we foresee
the death that we die
every second. Op-
posites unite and nothing
new or arhythmic
is discovered. We
take refuge in, we take flight
into irrationality,
magic,
abnormality, in fear
of the extraordinary
beauty of the truth

de lo material y
dialéctico, de lo
sano y fuerte -
nos gusta ser enfer-
mos para protegernos.
Alguien - algo - nos
protege siempre de la
verdad - nuestra
propia ignorancia
y nuestro miedo.
Miedo a Todo - miedo
a saber que no somos
otra cosa que:
vectores dirección
construcción y destrucción
para ser vivos, y

of matter and
dialectics, of whatever is
healthy and strong -
we like being
sick to protect ourselves.
Someone - something - al-
ways protects us from the
truth - Our
own ignorance
and fear.
Fear of everything - fear
of knowing that we are
no more than
vectors direction
construction and destruction
to be alive, and

sentir la angustia de
esperar al minuto
siguiente y partici-
par en la corriente
compleja de no
saber que nos di-
rigimos a nosotros
misimos, a través de
millones de seres-
piedras- de seres ave-
de seres astros - de
seres microbios - de
seres fuentes a

to feel the anguish of
waiting for the next mo-
ment and of taking
part in the complex
current (of affairs) not
knowing that we are
headed toward our-
selves, through
millions of stone
beings - of bird beings -
of star beings - of
microbe beings - of
fountain beings toward

nosotros mismos -
variedad del uno
incapaces de escapar -
para al dos - al tres -
al etc de siempre -
para regresar al uno -
Pero no a la suma
(llamados a veces dios -
a veces libertad a veces
amor - No - Somos
odio - amor - madre -
hijo - planta - tierra -
luz - rayo - etc - de
siempre - Mundo dador
de mundos - universos
y celulas universos
Yas!

ourselves -
variety of the one
incapable of escap-
ing to the two - to the three -
to the usual -
to return to the one.
Yet not the sum
(sometimes called God -
sometimes freedom sometimes
love - no - we are
hatred - love - mother -
child - plant - earth -
light - ray - as
usual - world bringer
of worlds - universes
and cell universes -
Enough!



Sleep Sleep
Sleep Sleep
Sleep
Sleep
I'm falling asleep

1a Convicción de que no estoy de acuerdo
 con la contrarrevolución - imperialismo -
 fascismo - religiones - estu-
 pidéz - capitalismo - y toda la
 gama de trucos de la burgue-
 sía - Deseo de cooperar a la
 Revolución para la transforma-
 ción del mundo en uno sin
 clases para llegar a un ritmo
 mejor para las clases oprimidas
 2a momento oportuno para
 clarificar a los aliados de la
 Revolución ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~
~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~
 Leer a Lenin - Stalin -
 Aprender que yo no soy
 sino una "pinche" parte
 de un movimiento revo-
 lucionario.
 Siempre revolucionario
 nunca muerto, nunca inútil

1st. I'm convinced of my disagreement
 with the counterrevolution - imperialism -
 fascism - religions - stu-
 pidity - capitalism - and the
 whole gamut of bourgeois tricks -
 I wish to cooperate with the
 Revolution in transform-
 ing the world into a class-
 less one so that we can attain
 a better rhythm for the oppressed classes
 2nd. a timely moment to
 clarify who are the allies of the
 Revolution
 Read Lenin - Stalin -
 Learn that I am nothing
 but a "small damned" part
 of a revolutionary
 movement.
 Always revolutionary
 never dead, never useless

1910-1953
En toda mi vida
he tenido 22 operacio-
nes quirúrgicas -
X El Dr Juanito Farill
a quien considero un
verdadero hombre de
ciencia y además un
ser heroico por que ha pa-
sado su vida entera sal-
vando a los enfermos san-
tos un enfermo también
12 años de los 6 años -
para la discapacidad poliomielitis
1926 - bus accidente en Camer
ALEX.

1910-1953
In all my life
I have had 22 surgical
interventions -
Dr Juanito Farill, who I consider to be a
true man of
science, and also a
heroic being because he has spent
his entire life sav-
ing the lives of the ill when
he himself is ill also
1st illness, when I was 6
infantile paralysis (poliomyelitis)
1926 - bus accident
with ALEX

1950-51.
He estado enferma un
año. Siete operaciones
en la columna vertebral.
El Doctor Farill me
salvó. Me volvió a dar
alegría de vivir. Toda-
vía estoy en la silla
de ruedas, y no sé si
pronto volveré a andar.
Tengo el corset de yeso
que a pesar de ser una
lata favorosa, me ayu-
da a sentirme mejor de
la espina. No tengo do-
lores. Solamente me
causan de la... tiga
da, y como es natural
muchas veces desape-

1950-51

I've been sick for a
year now. Seven operations
on my spinal column.
Doctor Farill saved
me. He brought me
back the joy of life. I
am still in the wheel-
chair, and I don't know if
I'll be able to walk again soon.
I have a plaster corset
even though it is a
frightful nuisance, it helps
my spine. I don't feel any
pain. Only this ... bloody
tiredness, and naturally,
quite often, despair.

ración: Una desesperación que ninguna palabra puede describir. Sin embargo tengo ganas de vivir. Ya comencé a pintar. El cuadrito que voy a regalarle al Dr Farill y que estoy haciendo con todo mi cariño para él. Tengo mucha inquietud en el asunto de mi pintura. Sobre todo por transformarla para que sea algo útil al movimien

A despair which no
words can describe.
I'm still eager to live. I've
started to paint again. A
little picture to
give to Dr Farill on which I'm working
with all my love.
I feel un-
easy about my painting. Above
all I want to transform
it into something
useful for the Communist

to revolutionary commu-
nists, pues hasta ahora
no he pintado sino
la expresion honrada
de mi misma, pero
alejada absolutamente
de lo que mi pintura
pueda servir al partido.
Debo luchar con todas
mis fuerzas para que
lo poco de positivo que
mi salud me deja
hacer sea en direccion
a ayudar a la revo-
lucion. La unica
razon real para vivir.

revolutionary movement, since up to now
I have only painted the
earnest portrayal of
myself, but
I'm very far from
work that
could serve the Party.
I have to fight with all
my strength to
contribute the few positive things
my health allows me
to the revo-
lution. The only
true reason to live for.



DOG



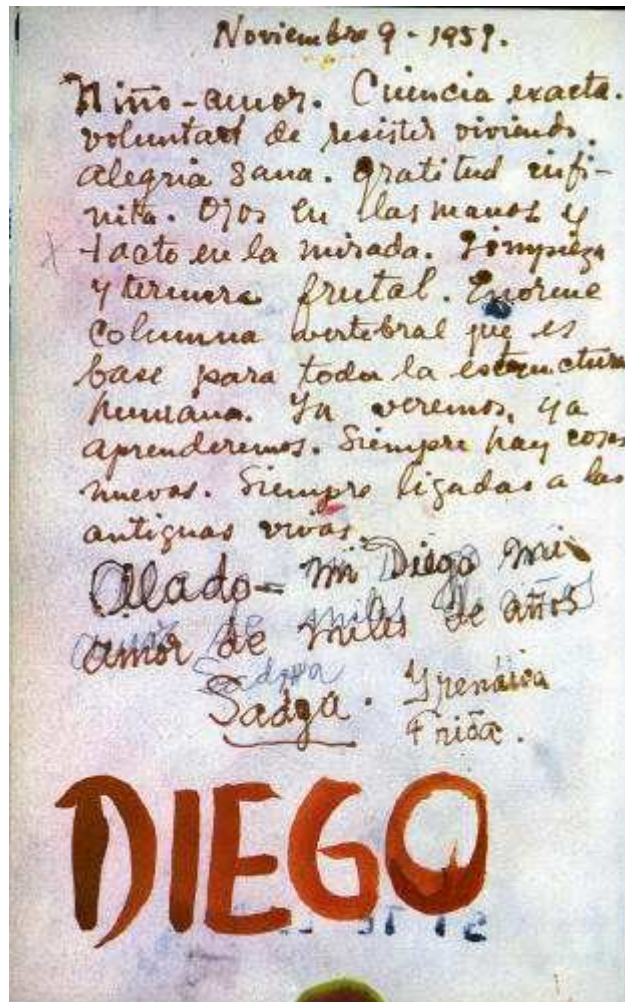
What a dish!



DON'T COME CRYING TO ME!



YES, I COME CRYING TO YOU



November 9-1951
 Child-love. Exact science.
 the will to resist and still live
 healthy happiness. infinite grati-
 tude. Sight in the hands and
 touch in the eyes. Neat
 and gentle as fruit. The enormous
 spine is
 the basis of all human
 structure. We shall see, we shall
 learn. There is always something
 new. Always tied to
 ancient existence.
 Winged - My Diego my
 love of thousands of years.
 Sadga. Yrenaica
 Frida.
 DIEGO

1952 Noviembre 4.
 Hoy como nunca estoy acompa-
 ñada. ^{desde hace} ~~20~~ 25 años) Soy
 un ser yo comunista. Sé
~~He leído~~ ^{He leído} ~~metódicamente~~
 los principales ~~principales~~ ^{principales} ~~origines~~
~~en~~ raíces antiguas.
 He leído la Historia de mi país
 de casi todos los pueblos. Conozco
 ya sus conflictos de talaseja
 económicos. Comprendo claramente
 el dialectical materialista de
 Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin
 y Mao Tse. Ego amo como
 a los pilares del nuevo mundo
 comunista. Ya comprendo el
 error de Trotsky desde que lle-
 gó a México. Yo jamás fui
 Trotskyista. Pero en esa época
 1920- Yo era solamente aliada.

1952 November 4.

Today I'm in better com-
 pany than for 20 years) I
 am a self I am a Communist.

I know

["I have read methodically" - marked out]
 that the main origins are wrapped
 in ancient roots.

I have read the History of my country
 and of nearly all nations. I know
 their class struggles and
 their economic conflicts.

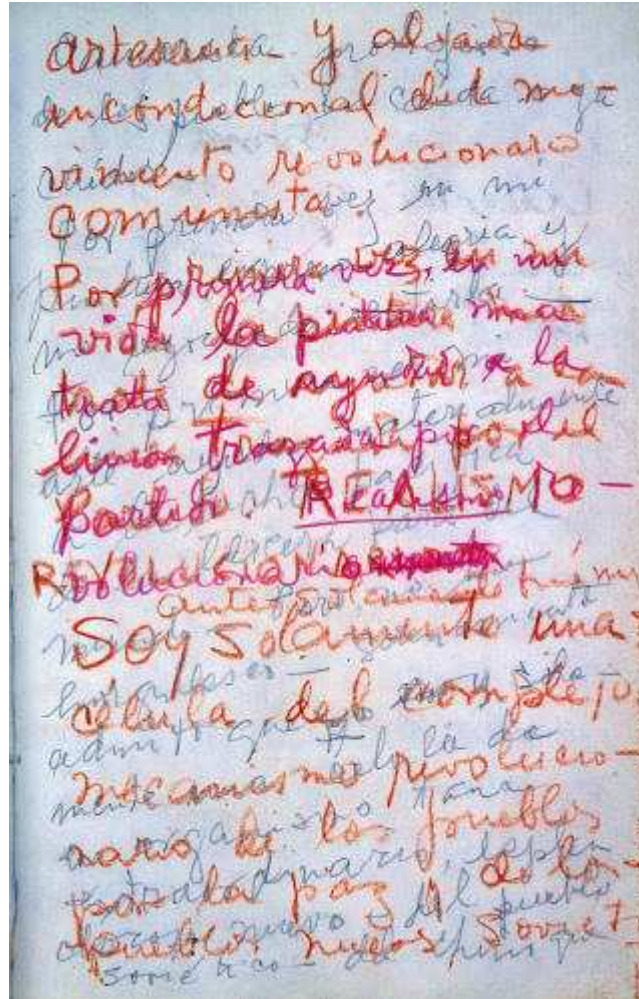
I understand quite clearly
 the dialectical materialism of
 Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin
 and Mao Tse. I love them as
 the pillars of the new Com-
 munist world. Since Trotsky came
 to Mexico I have understood
 his error. I was never

a Trotskyist. But in those days
1940 - my only alliance was with

de Diego. (personalmente)
Fervor político pero
hay que tomar en
cuenta que estuve
en forma desde
los seis años de edad
y realmente muy poco
de mi vida he gozado
de SALUD y fuí inútil
al Partido. Ahora en
1953. Después de 22
operaciones quirúrgicas
me siento mejor y po-
dré de contribuir en
cuentos a mi
Partido Comunista. Ya
que no sé cuánto si soy

Diego (personally)
Political fervor. But
one has to make allowances
for the fact that I had been
sick since I was
six years old
and for really very short periods
of my life have I enjoyed
truly good HEALTH and I was of no use
to the Party. Now in
1953. After 22
surgical interventions
I feel better and
now and then I will
be able to help my

Communist Party. Although
I'm not a worker, but a



craftswoman - And an uncon-
ditional ally of the Com-
munist revolutionary
movement.

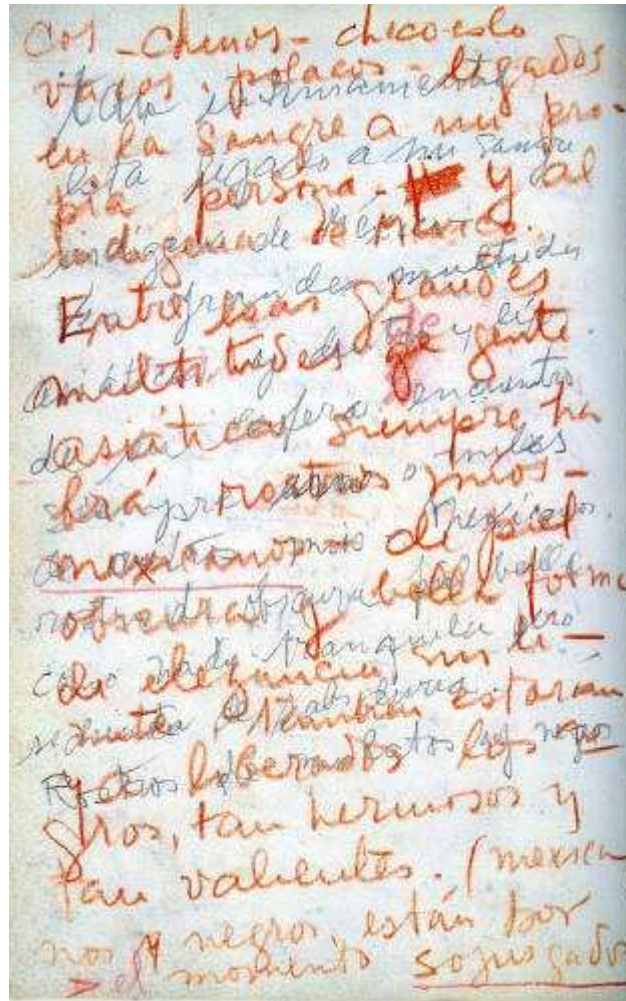
For the first time in my
life my painting
is trying to help in the
line set down by the

Party. REVOLUTIONARY
REALISM

Before it was my earliest
experience -

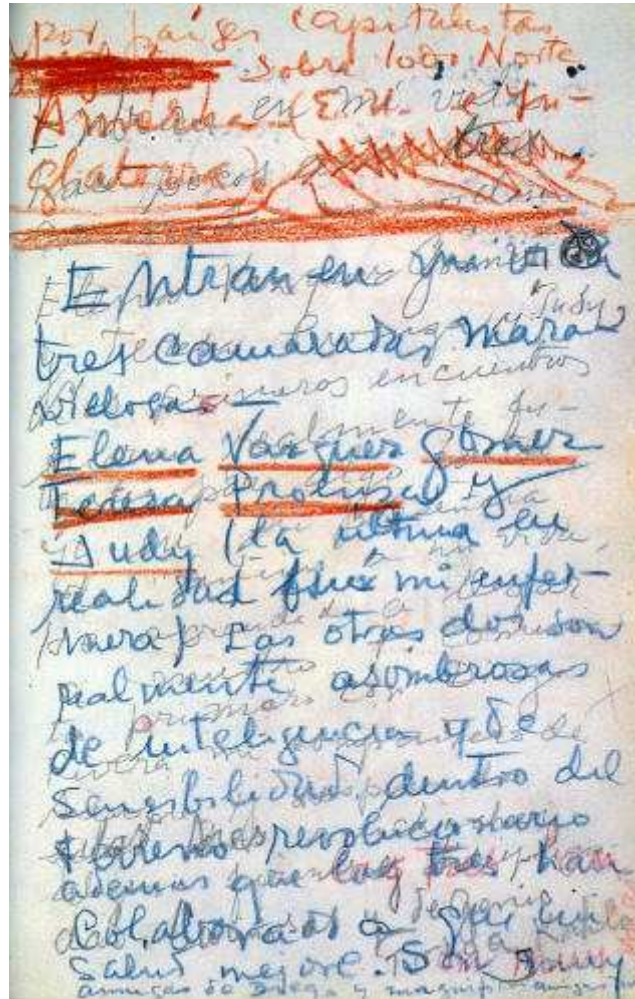
I am only a
cell in the complex revolutionary mech-
anism of the peoples

for peace in the
new nations, Soviets –



Chinese - Czecho-
slovakians - Poles - united
in blood to me. And to
the Mexican Indian.
Among those great
multitudes of Asian
people there will always be
the faces of my own -
Mexicans - with dark
skin and beautiful form,
with limitless
grace. The black
people would also
be freed, so beautiful and
so brave. (Mexicans

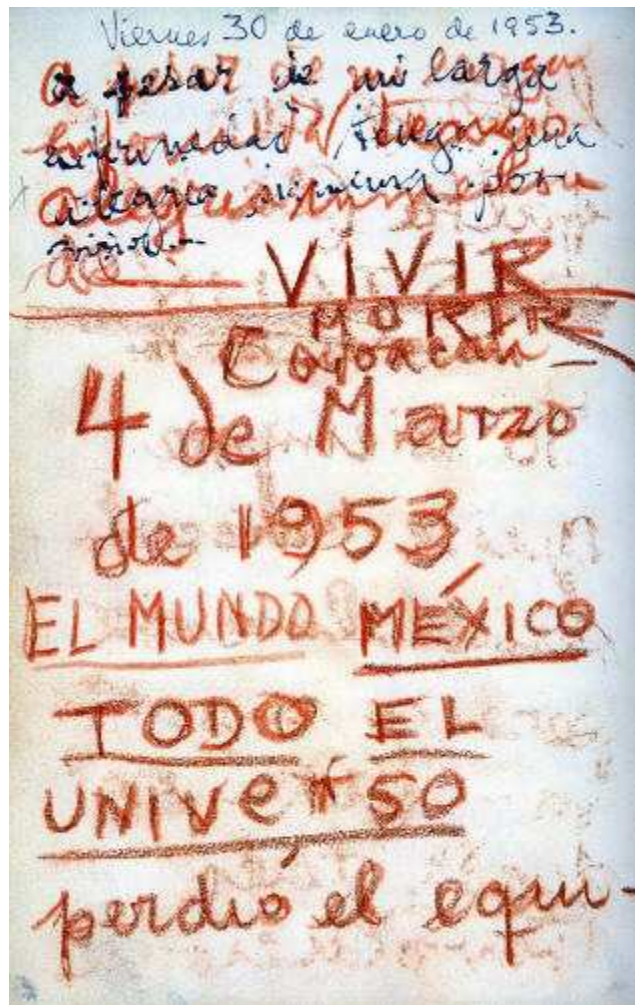
and negroes are
subjugated for now



by capitalist countries
above all North
America - (U.S. and
England). xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Three wonderful
comrades came into
my life -
Elena Vazquez Gomez
Teresa Proenza and
Judy (the last
was really my
nurse) The other two are
really astounding
in intelligence

and sensibility in the
revolutionary cause
in addition the three of them have
collaborated so that my
health has improved. They are very good
friends of Deigo's and great friends of mine



Friday 30 January 1953.

In spite of my long
illness, I feel
immense joy
in
LIVING

dying
Coyoacan
4 March
1953

THE WORLD MEXICO
THE WHOLE
UNIVERSE
has lost its bal-

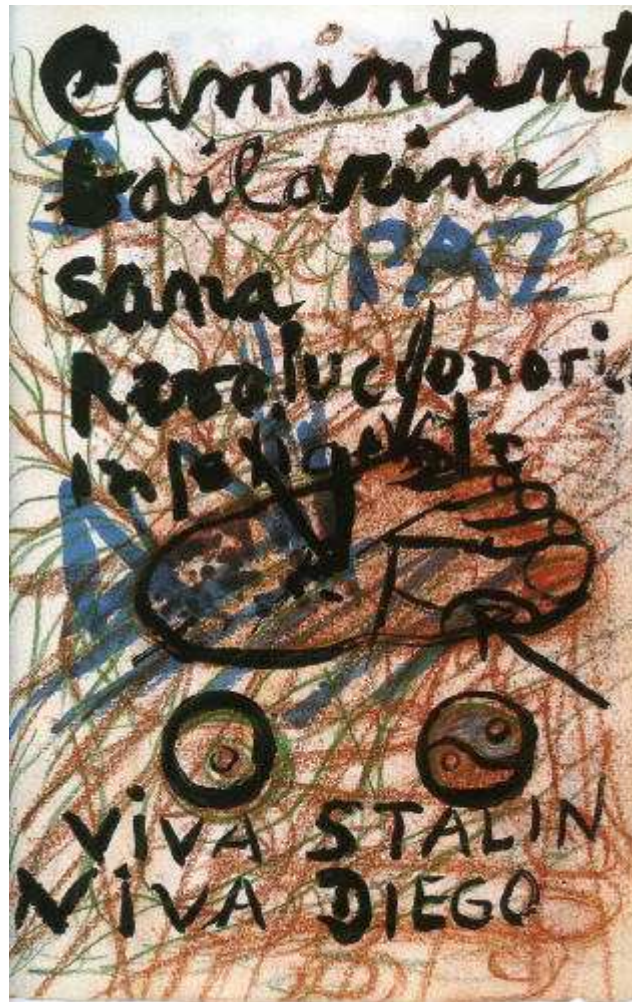


ance with the
loss (the passing)
of STALIN -
I always
wanted to meet him
personally
but it no longer
matters - There is nothing
left everything
revolves

- Malenkov -



Madera
379



Walker
dancer
healthy PEACE
Revolutionary
intelligent

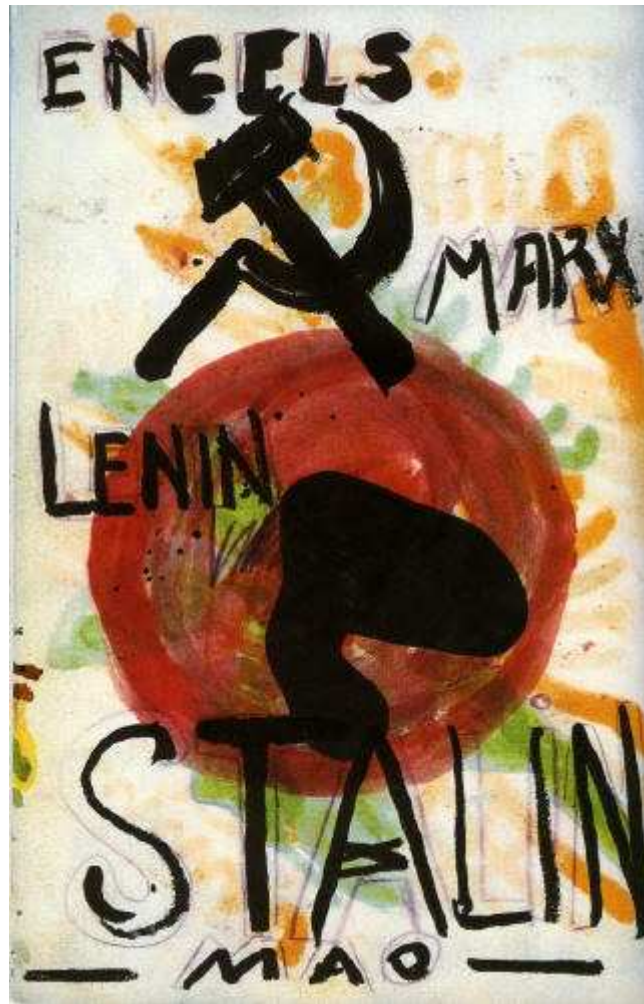
LONG LIVE STALIN
LONG LIVE DIEGO



March 53
My Diego.
I'm no longer
alone.
Wings?
You keep me compa-
ny. You lull me to
sleep and make me come alive



I love Diego
Love



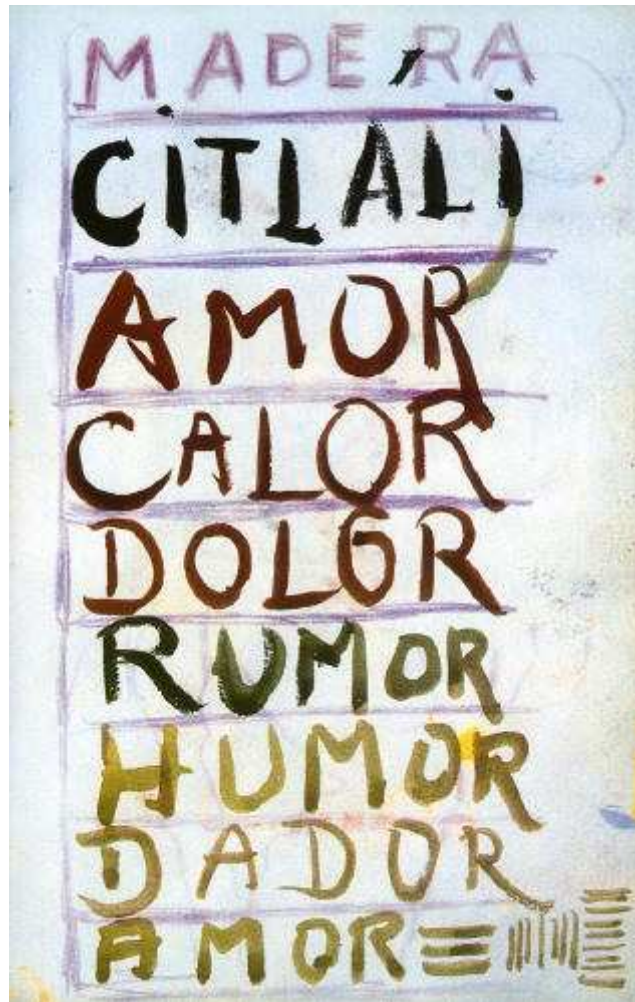
ENGELS
MARX
LENIN
STALIN
MAO



MOON SUN
ME?



DEATHS
IN
A RIOT



WOOD
CITLALI [Nahuatl word meaning "star"]
LOVE
WARMTH
PAIN
RUMOR
HUMOR
BRINGER
LOVE





Chabela Villasenor --
Ruddy

Long live
Comrades
STALIN
MAO

Life
Death

WORLD
DOE
PAINTER
POET

Long live
Marx
Engels
Lenin



TAO



Friday 13 March 1953.
 You left us, Chabela Villasenor
 But your voice
 your electricity
 your enormous talent
 your poetry
 your light

your mystery
 your Olinka
 all that remains of you - is still alive.

ISABEL VILLASENOR
 FOREVER ALIVE!
 GOLDEN Section

Ruddy
 Ruddy
 Ruddy
 Ruddy

Like the blood
that runs
when they kill
a deer.

PAINTER
POET
SINGER



FOR THE OLD CONCEALER
FISITA. Distemper together 4 equal parts
of egg yolks raw linseed oil

egg yolk = raw linseed oil = compound of damar gum blended in turpentine = water

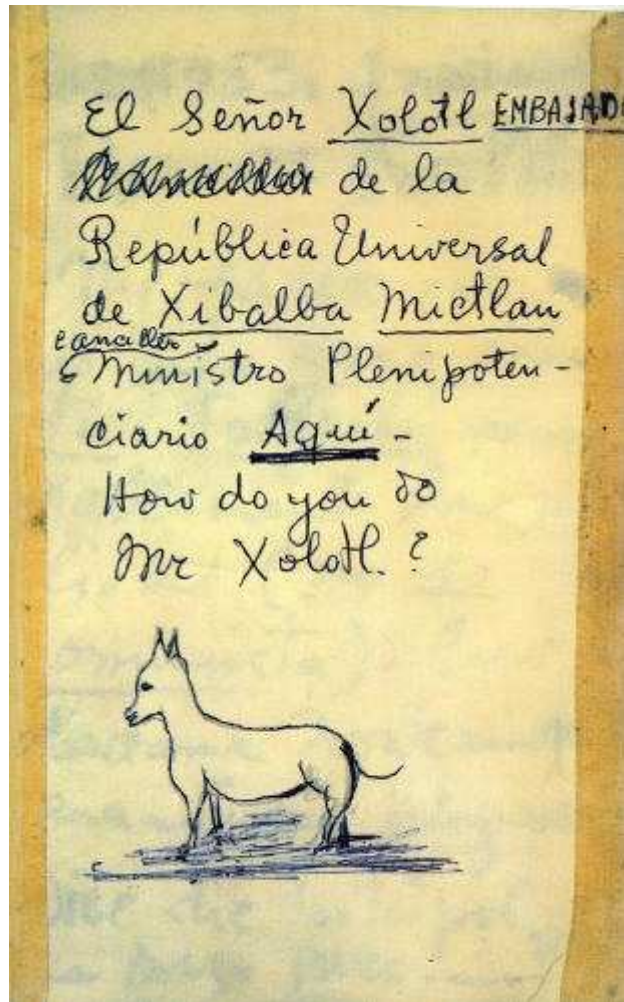
damar gum dissolved in turpentine
and distilled water, with disinfectant
take = concentrated aldehyde alcohol. 1/2 gram.

to a liter of water.

crushed damar
inside of
lemon
[suspended in]
turpentine
for 8
to 10 days.

remove all the
white from the
yolk.

1. Make an emulsion of the ingredients
2. Grind the colors into the emulsion
3. If a glossy texture is desired, increase the amount of damar, up to two parts.
4. If an overall mat finish is desired increase the water up to three parts



The Lord Xolotl AMBASSADOR
["Chancellor" - marked out] of the
Universal Republic
of Xibalba Mictlan
Chancellor Minister Plenipoten-
tiary Here --
How do you do
Mr. Xolotl?

10 Enero 1953
~~1953~~ 1953. Invierno
Bernice Kolko
Me parece que
es una gran artis-
ta. Fotografía admirable-
mente la po-
lítica (no es
comunista). Cier-
dadana Norteameri-
cana - Judía Húngara.
Dice que está por
la paz. Pero.....?

1 January 1953
xxxx 1953, Winter
Bernice Kolko
I think she
is a great art-
ist. She photographs re-
ality admir-
ably. (she is not a
Communist) An
American
citizen - Hungarian Jew
She says she is for
peace, but?



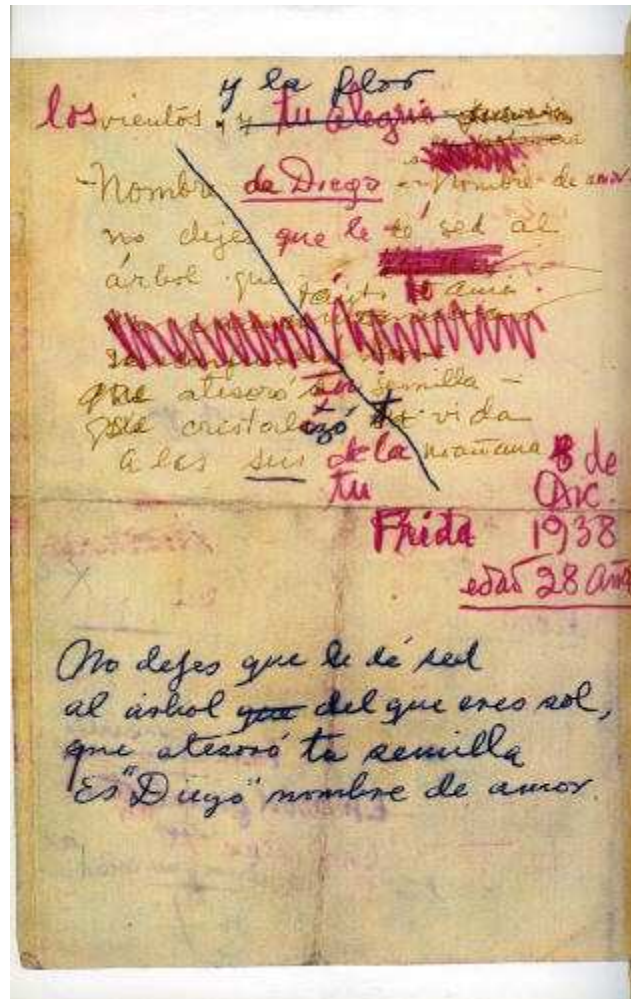
Are you leaving? No.
BROKEN WINGS



My own child - from the great Concealer
PARIS - Coyoacan D.F. 8 Dec. 1938 N.Y.

It is six o'clock in the morning
and the turkeys are singing,
Warmth of human tenderness
Companionable solitude -
Never, in all my life
will I forget your presence
You took me to you when I was shattered
and you restored me to a complete whole
In this small world
where shall I turn my eyes?
It's deep immense!
There isn't enough time there isn't enough
nothing. There is only reality.
What once was is long gone!
What remains, are the transparent
roots appearing transformed into
an eternal fruit tree
Your fruits already give scent

your flowers give color
blooming in the joy of



wind and flower ["and your happiness" - marked out]

Name of Diego - Name of love.

Don't let the tree get
thirsty it loves you so much.
it treasured your seed
it crystallized your life
at six in the morning

Your Frida
8 Dec. 1938
age 28 years

Don't let the tree get
thirsty, you are its sun,

it treasured your seed
"Diego" is the name of love.



A fact Diego told me
Diego lived in Paris:
26 Rue de Depart, next
to the Montparnasse railway station.
21 March. Springtime
Tao MAO
7 July. Sadga 1953

8th. December
Diego. LOVE

Will the year 1953 end in
a war between the
imperialists? Very like-

ly.
NAME OF WATER



Color of poison.
Everything upside down.
ME? Sun
and
moon
feet
and
Frida



~~El árbol de la Esperanza~~
 La vida callada...
 dadora de mundos. @
 Venados heridos ✓
 Ropas de ~~Tehuana~~
 Rayos, ~~palmas~~, Soles
 ritmos escondidos
 "La niña Mariana"
 frutos ya muy vivos.
 la muerte se aleja -
 líneas, formas, nidos.
 las manos construyen
 los ojos abiertos
 los Diegos sentidos
 lágrimas enteras
 todas son muy claras
 Cósmicas verdades
 que viven sin puidos.

 Árbol de la Esperanza
 mantente firme.

mi exposición en México. 1963.

The quiet life ...
 giver of worlds ...
 Wounded deer
 Tehuanas
 Lightning, grief, suns
 hidden rhythms
 "La niña Mariana"
 to lively fruit
 death goes away -
 lines, forms, nests.
 hands build
 wide open eyes
 the Diego I felt
 whole tears
 all very clear,
 cosmic truths
 that live soundlessly.

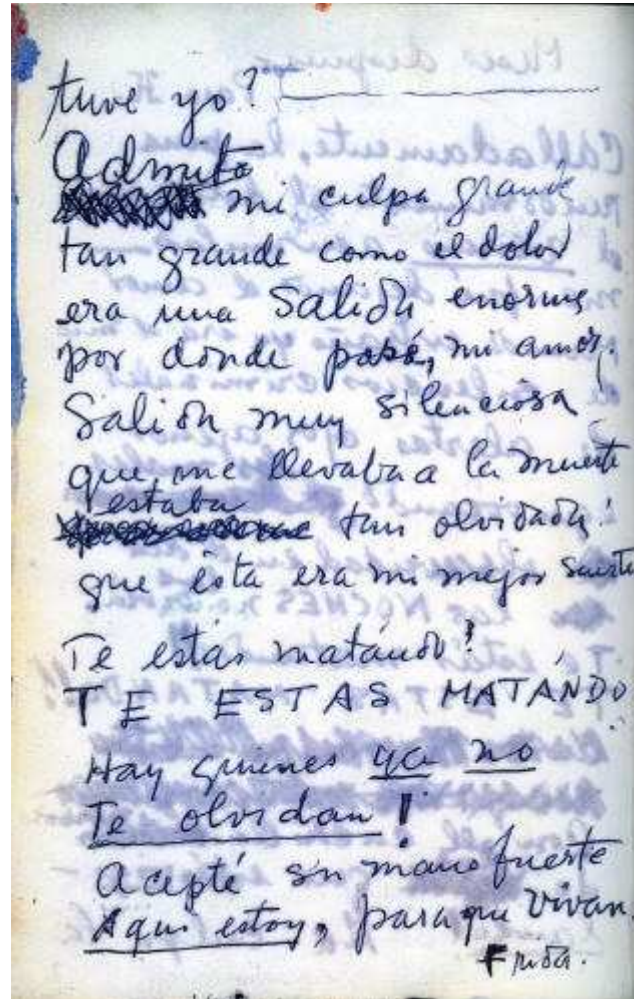
Tree of Hope
 stand firm.

My exhibition in Mexico. 1953.

Months later - Para H.
Calladamente, la pena
ruidosamente el dolor.
el veneno acumulado
me fue dejando el amor.
Mundo extraño ya era el mío
de silencios criminales
de alertas ojos ajenos
equivocando ~~los males~~
~~la~~ obscuridad en el día
~~las~~ NOCHES no vivía.
Te estás matando!!
TE ESTAS MATANDO!!
~~Con el cuchillo~~
~~de~~ Con el cuchillo ^{morboso}
de ~~los~~ que están vigi-
lando! La culpa la

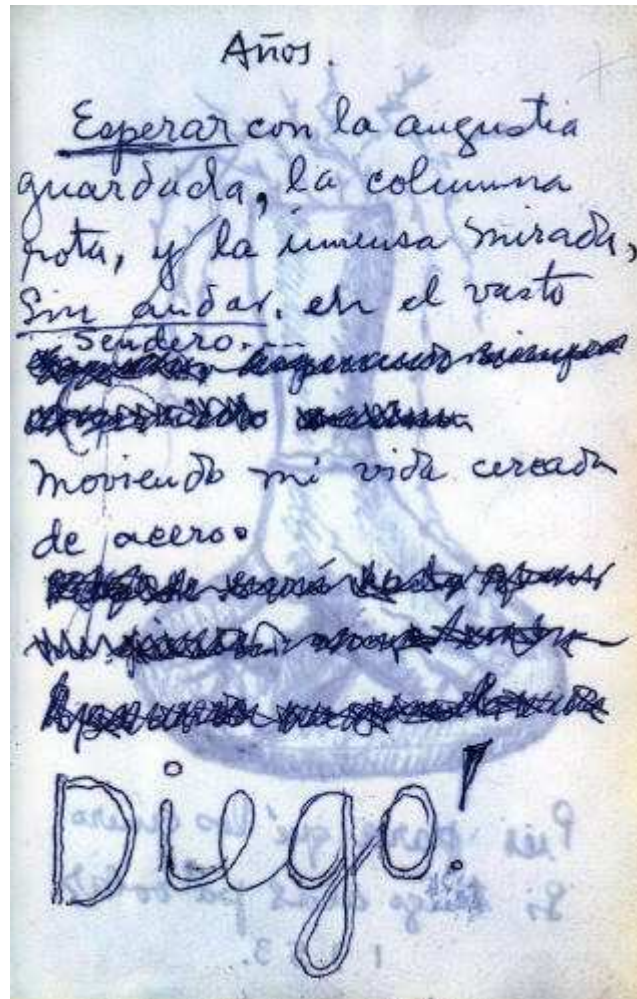
Months later -
For H.
Quietly, the grief
loudly the pain.
the accumulated poison
love faded away.
Mine was a strange world
of criminal silences
of strangers' watchful eyes
misreading the evil.
darkness in the daytime
I didn't live the NIGHTS.
You are killing yourself!!
YOU ARE KILLING YOURSELF!!
With the morbid knife

of those who are watch-
ing! Was it



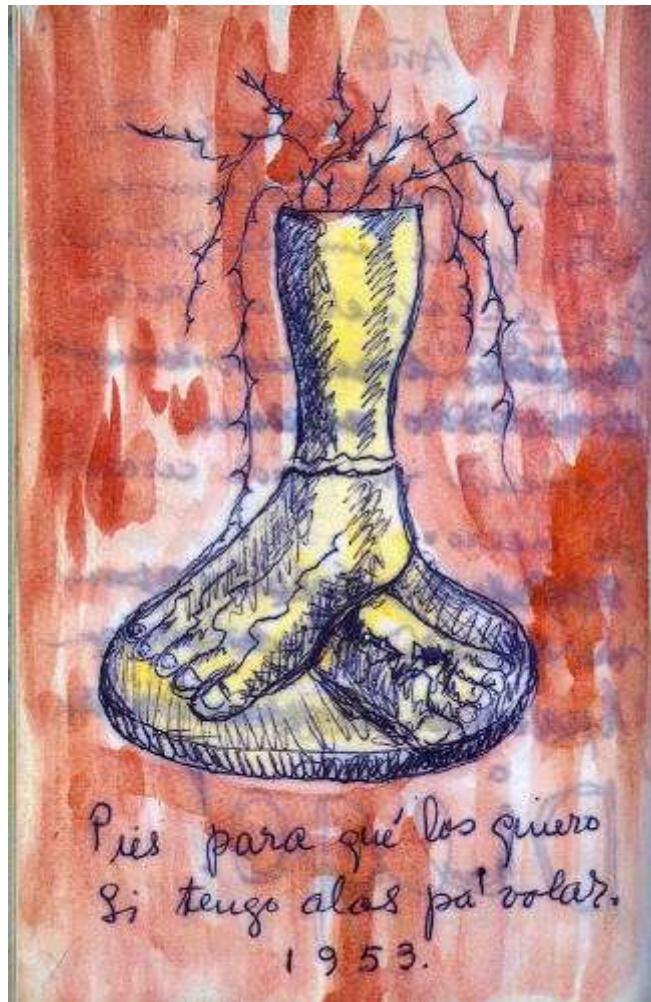
my fault?
I admit, my great guilt
as great as pain
it was an enormous exit
which my love came through.
A very quiet passage
that was leading me toward death
I was so neglected!
that it would have been best for me.
You are killing yourself!
YOU ARE KILLING YOURSELF
There are some who will
never forget you!
I took their strong hands

Here I am, for them to live.
Frida.



Years.
Waiting with anguish
hidden away, my spine
broken, and the immense glance,
footless through the vast
path ...
Carrying on my life
enclosed
in steel.

Diego!



Feet what do I need them for
If I have wings to fly.
1953.



Si tan solo tuviera cerca
 de mí su caricia, ^{el aire se la da.}
 Como ~~a~~ la tierra ~~que me rodea~~
~~que me rodea~~ la realidad
 de su persona, me haría
 más alegre, me alejaría
 del sentido que me ~~rodea~~ ^{llena}
 de gris. Nada ya sería
 en mí tan hondo, tan
 final. Pero cómo le explico
 mi necesidad enorme de
 ternura! Mi soledad de
 años. Mi estructura incon-
 forme por inarmónica,
 por inadaptada. Yo creo
 que es mejor ^{irme} ~~irse~~, ^{irme} ~~irse~~
 no escaparse. Que todo
 pase en un instante. Ojalá

If only, I had his
 caresses upon me
 As the air touches the earth -
 the reality
 of his person, would make me
 merrier, it would take me away
 from the feeling which fills me
 with gray. Nothing inside
 me would be so deep, so
 final. But, how can I explain to him
 my need for
 tenderness! My loneliness over
 the years. My structure displeases
 because of its lack of harmony,
 its unfitness. I think
 it would be better for me to go, to go and
 not to run away. If it were all
 over with in an instant. I hope so



RUINS



TOUCHED, NOT CRAZY.

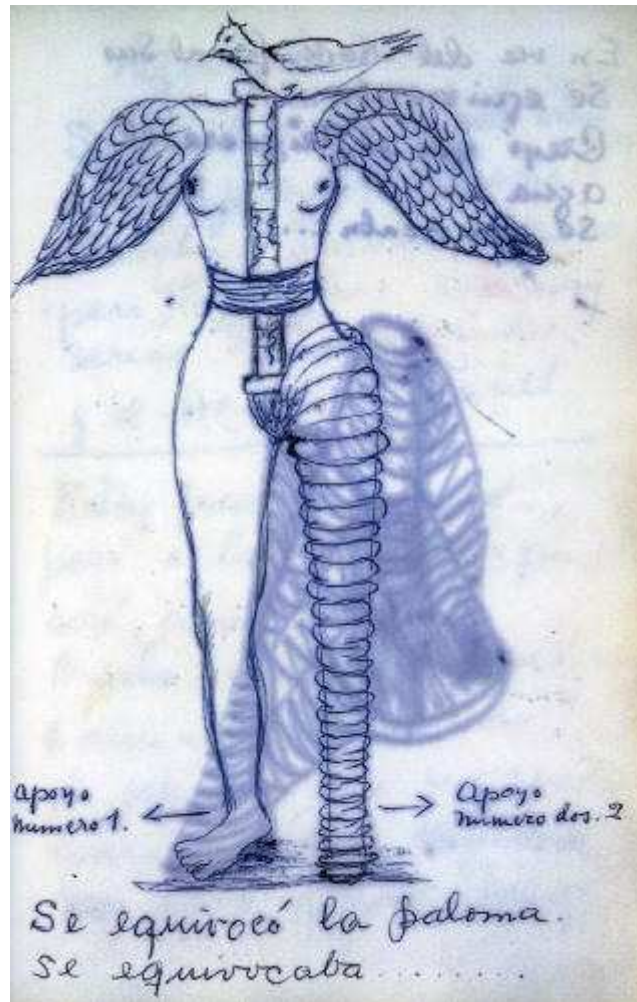
Julio. 1953
Cuernavaca.
Puntos de apoyo.
En mi figura completa
solo hay uno; y quiero
dos.
Para tener yo los dos
me tienen que cortar uno
Es el uno que no tengo el
que tengo que tener.
Para poder caminar
el otro será ya muerto!
A mi, las alas me
sobran.
Que las corten.
y a volar!!

July 1953.
Cuernavaca
Supporting points
In my entire figure
There is only one, and I want
two.
For me to have two
they must cut one off
It is the one I don't have the
one I have to have
to be able to walk
the other will be dead!
I have many,
wings.
Cut them off
and to hell with it!!

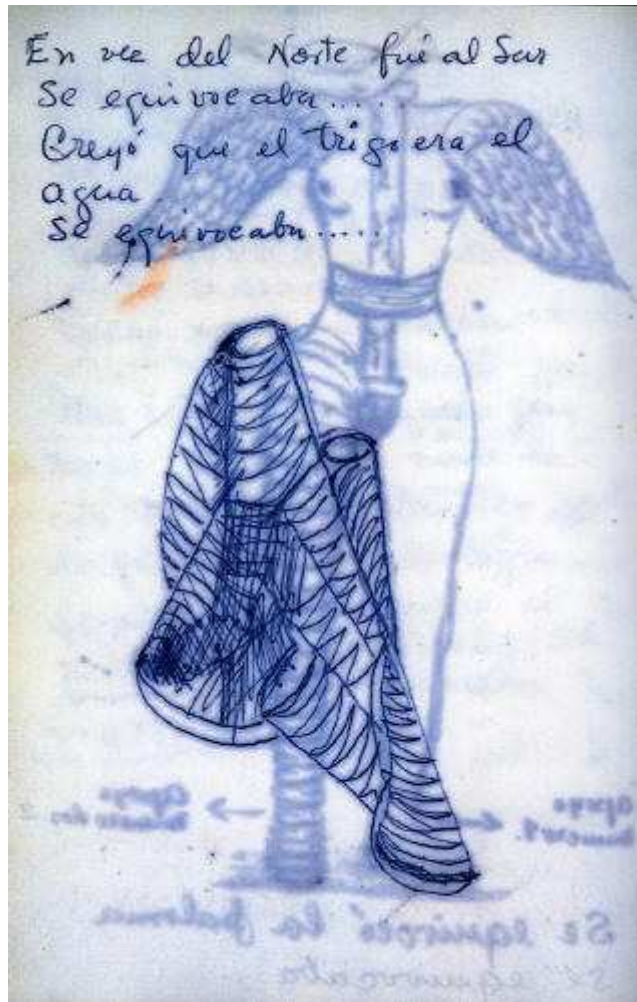
HIERONYMUS Bosch
Murió en HERTOGEN BOSCH
AÑO 1516.
HIERONYMUS Aquen
alias BOSCH.
pintor maravilloso.
Quizá nació en Aachen.
Me inquieta mucho que
no se sepa casi nada de
este hombre fantástico
de genio. Casi un siglo
después, (menos) vivió el
magnífico BREUGEL, EL
VIEJO, mi amado.

HIERONYMUS Bosch
Died in HERTOGENBOSCH
in the YEAR 1516.
HIERONYMUS Aquen
alias BOSCH.
wonderful painter.
perhaps born in Aachen.

It disturbs me very much that
there is so little known about
this fantastic man
of genius. Almost a century
later, (less) lived the
great BREUGHEL, THE
ELDER, my loved one.



support number 1
support number two. 2
The pigeon made mistakes.
It made mistakes



Instead of going North it went South
It made mistakes
It thought the wheat was
water
It made mistakes

Agosto de 1953.

Seguridad de que me van
a amputar la pierna
derecha. Detalles sé pocos
pero ^{las} opiniones son muy
serias. Dr. Luis Mendes
y el Dr. Juan Farill.

Estoy preocupada, mucho,
pero a la vez siento que
será una liberación.
Ojalá y pueda ya
comenzando dar todo
el esfuerzo que me queda
para ~~para~~ Diego. ~~todo~~
~~para~~ todo para Diego.

August 1953.

It is certain that they are going
to amputate my right
leg. Details I don't know much
but the opinions are very
reliable. Dr. Luis Mendes
and Dr. Juan Farill.

I'm very very, worried,
but at the same time I feel
it would be a relief.
In the hope that when
I walk again
I'll give what remains of
my courage
to Diego.
everything for Diego.

11 de Febrero de 1954.
Me amputaron la pierna
hace 6 meses.
Pero se me han pasado
Siglos de tortura y
en momentos casi perdí
la razón. Sigo sintiendo
ganas de suicidarme.
Diego es el que me detiene
por mis vanidades de
cree que la pierna ha
faltado. El mundo ha
dicho y yo lo creo. Pero
nunca en la vida he suf-
rido más.
Esperare un tiempo.

11 February 1954
They amputated my leg
6 months ago
It seemed to me
centuries of torture and
at times I nearly went
crazy. I still feel like
committing suicide
Diego prevents me from doing it in the vain
belief that maybe he will
need me. He has told me
so and I believe him. But
I have never suffered so
much in my life.
I'll wait a while.

Estamos ya en Marzo
 Primavera 21.
 He logrado mucho.
 Seguridad al caminar
 Seguridad al pintar.
 Amo a Diego más
 que a mi misma.
 Mi voluntad es grande
 Mi voluntad permanece.
 Gracias al amor y al
 sacrificio de Diego.
 Del trabajo honrado
 e inteligente del
 Dr Farill. Al intento
 tan honesto y cariñoso,
 del Dr Ramon Parres
 y al cariñoso Dr de
 toda mi vida David
 Glusker y al Dr
 Elossier.

It is already March
 Springtime 21
 I have achieved a lot.
 Confidence in walking
 Confidence in painting.
 I love Diego more
 than myself.
 My will is strong
 My will remains.
 Thanks to Diego's
 magnificent love.
 To the integrity and
 intelligent work of
 Dr Farill. To the earnest
 and affectionate efforts
 of Dr Ramon Parres
 and to the kindness
 of David
 Glusker who has been my

doctor all my life and to Dr
Eloesser.



Miss Capulina

Abril 27-1954
X Salí sana - hice la
promesa y la cumpliré
de jamás volver atrás.
Gracias a Diego, gra-
cias a mi Tere, gracias
a Graciélita y a la niña,
gracias a Judith, gracias
a Isaura Mino, gracias
a Lupita Zuniga, gra-
cias al Dr. Ramon Parres
gracias al Dr. Glusker,
gracias al Dr. Farill, al
Dr. Polo, al Dr. Armando
Navarro, al Dr. Vargas,
gracias a mí misma y

April 27-1954

I am well again -- I've made
a promise and I'll keep it
never to turn back.

Thanks to Diego, thanks
to my Tere, thanks
to Graciélita and the little girl,
thanks to Judith, thanks
to Isaura Mino, thanks
to Lupita Zuniga,
thanks to Dr. Ramon Parres
thanks to Dr. Glusker,
thanks to Dr. Farill, to
Dr. Polo, to Dr. Armando
Navarro, to Dr. Vargas,
Thanks to myself and

a mi voluntad enorme
de vivir entre todas las
que me quisieran y para
todos los que yo quiero.
Que viva la alegría,
la vida, Diego, Tere,
mi Judith y todas las enfer-
meras que he tenido en mi
vida que me han tratado
tan maravillosamente bien.
Gracias porque soy
comunista y lo he sido
toda mi vida.
Gracias al pueblo So-
viético, al pueblo chino
checoslovaco y polaco y al
pueblo de México, sobre todo

to my powerful will
to live among those
who love me and for
all those I love.
Long live joy,
life, Diego, Tere,
my Judith and all the nurses
I have had in my
life who have taken care of me
so marvelously well.
Thanks for being a Communist as I have been
all my life.
Thanks to the people of the So-
viet Union, to the people of China
Czechoslovakia, and Poland and to
the people of Mexico, above all

del de Coyoacán y
 donde nació mi pri-
 mera célula, que se
 incubó en Oaxaca,
 en el vientre de mi
 madre, que había na-
 cido ahí, casada con
 mi padre, Guillermo
 Kahlo - mi madre Ma-
 tilde Calderón, morena
 campanita de Oaxaca;
 Tarde maravillosa
 que pasamos aquí en
 Coyoacán; cuartos de Frida
 Diego, Tere y yo.
 Srta. Capulina
 Sr. Xolotl
 Srta. Kostic.

those of Coyoacan
 where my first cell
 was born,
 which was conceived in Oaxaca,
 in the womb of my
 mother, who was born
 there, married to
 my father, Guillermo
 Kahlo - my mother Ma-
 tilde Calderon, dark-skinned
 Tinker Bell from Oaxaca.
 Wonderful afternoon
 we spent here in
 Coyoacan; in Frida's room
 Diego, Tere and myself.
 Miss Capulina
 Mr. Xolotl
 Mrs. Kostic

Esquema de mi vida.
 1910. - nací en el cuarto
 de la esquina entre Londres
 y Allende de Coyoacán.
 A la una de la mañana.
 Mis abuelos paternos
 húngaros - nacidos en Arat
 Hungría - ya casados
 fueron a vivir a Alemania
 donde nacieron varios de
 sus hijos entre ellos mi
 padre, en Baden Baden
 Alemania - Guillermo Ka-
 hlo, Maria - Enriqueta
 Paula y otros. El emigró
 a México en el siglo 19.
 Radicó aquí siempre toda
 su vida. Se casó con una
 muchacha mexicana, ma-
 dre de mis hermanitas

Outline of my life.

1910 - I was born in the room
 on the corner of Londres Street
 and Allende in Coyoacan.

At one o'clock in the morn-
 ing. My paternal grandparents

Hungarian - born in Arat

Hungary - after their marriage
 they went to live in Germany

where some of their

children were born among them my

father, in Baden Baden

Germany - Guillermo Ka-

hlo, Maria - Enriqueta

Paula and others. He, emigrated

to Mexico in the 19th century.

He settled here for the rest of
 his life. He married a

Mexican girl, the mother
 of my sisters

Luisita y Margarita.
Al morir muy joven su seño-
ra se casó con mi madre
Matilde Calderón y González.
Hija esta de mi
Abuelo Antonio Calderón
de Morelia de raza
indígena mexicana micho-
acana y de mi abuelita
Isabel González y González
hija de un General español
Quien al morir puso a ella
y a su hermanita
Cristina en el convento de
las Biscaynas de Morelia
salvo a las niñas en su
abuelo - de profesión
fotógrafo y ahora hace
proyecciones de lo
cual todavía conserva.

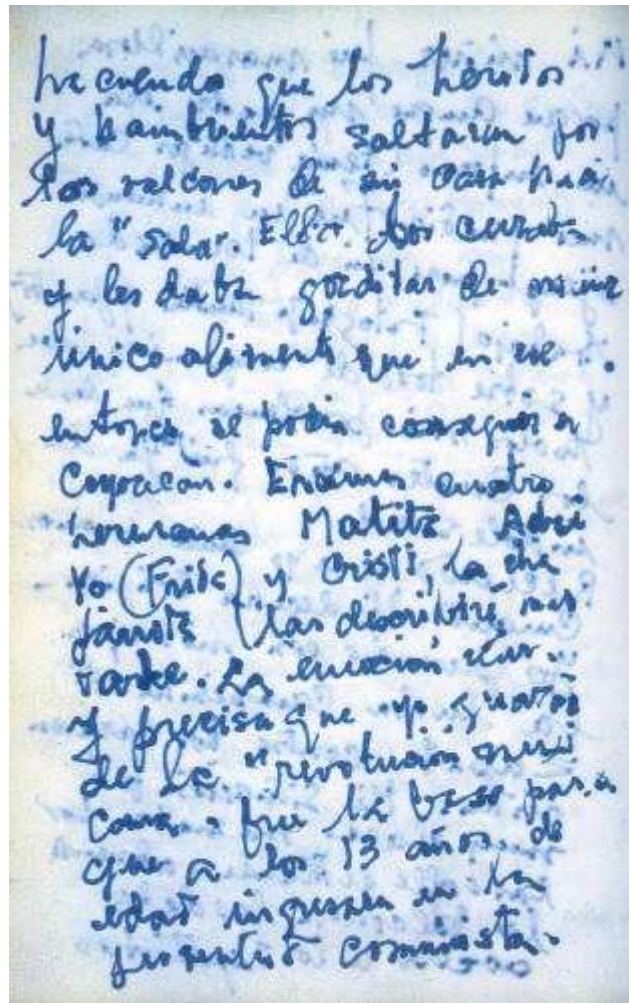
Luisita and Margarita.
When his wife died - very young -
he married my mother
Matilde Calderon y Gonzalez,
one of twelve children of my
grandfather Antonio Calderon
from Morelia - a Mexican of Indian race
from Micho-
acan and my grandmother
Isabel Gonzalez y Gonzalez
daughter of a Spanish general
Who died leaving her
and her little sister
Cristina in the convent of
the Biscayne nuns, which she
left to marry my
grandfather - a photographer
by profession, who still made

daguerreotypes, one of
which I have kept to this day.

Mi niñez fue maravillosa,
porque aunque mi padre era
un enfermo (tenía vértigo cada
mes y medio). Fue un inmenso
ejemplo para mí de ternura de
trabajo (fotógrafo también y pintor)
y sobre todo de comprensión. Para
todos mis problemas que desde
los cuatro años fui ya de
naturaleza social.
Recuerdo que yo tenía 4 años.
Cuando los diez años trágicos.
Yo presencié con mis ojos
la lucha campesina de
Zapata contra los carran-
distas. Mi situación fue
muy clara. Mi madre por
la calle de Alameda - abriendo
los balcones - les daba
acceso a los repetitivos

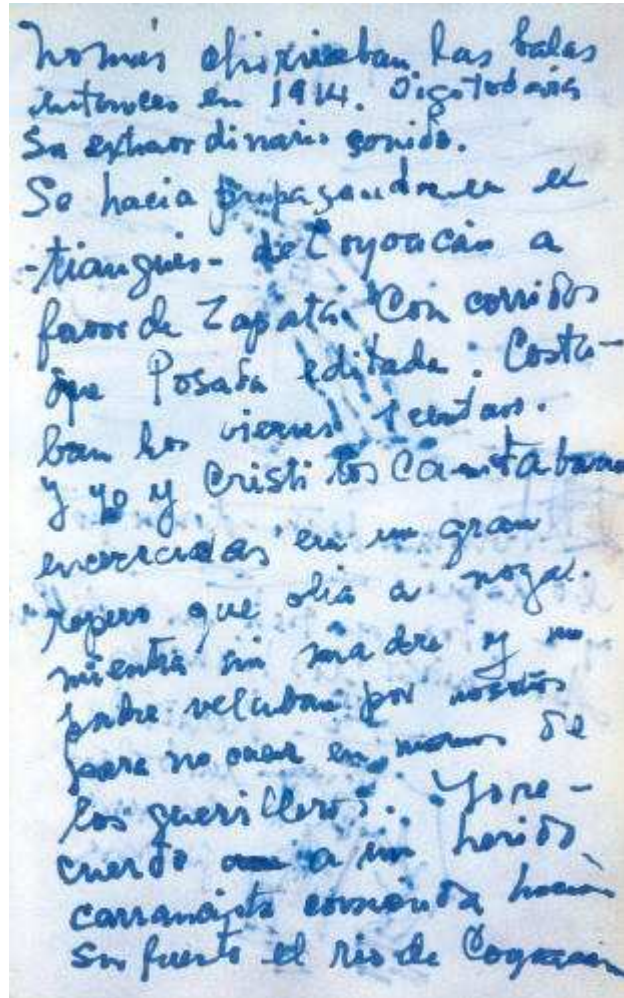
My childhood was wonderful
even though my father was
a sick man (he suffered from vertigo
every month and a half). He was the best
example for me of tenderness and
workmanship (also a photographer and painter)
but above all of understanding for
all my problems which since
I was four years old were of
a social nature.
I remember I was 4
when the tragic ten occurred.
I saw with my own eyes
the clash between Zapata's
peasants and the forces of Carran-

za. My position was
very clear. My mother opened
the balconies
on Allende Street getting the wounded
and hungry and to allow the
Zapatistas



to jump over the
balconies of my house
into the "drawing room." She tended their
wounds and fed them corn gorditas -
the only food available
at that time in
Coyoacan. We were four
sisters Matita Adri
me (Frida) and Cristi, the chub-
by midget (I'll describe them
later). The clear and precise

emotions of the "Mexican Revolution" that I keep
were the reason why,
at the age of 13,
I joined the Communist youth.

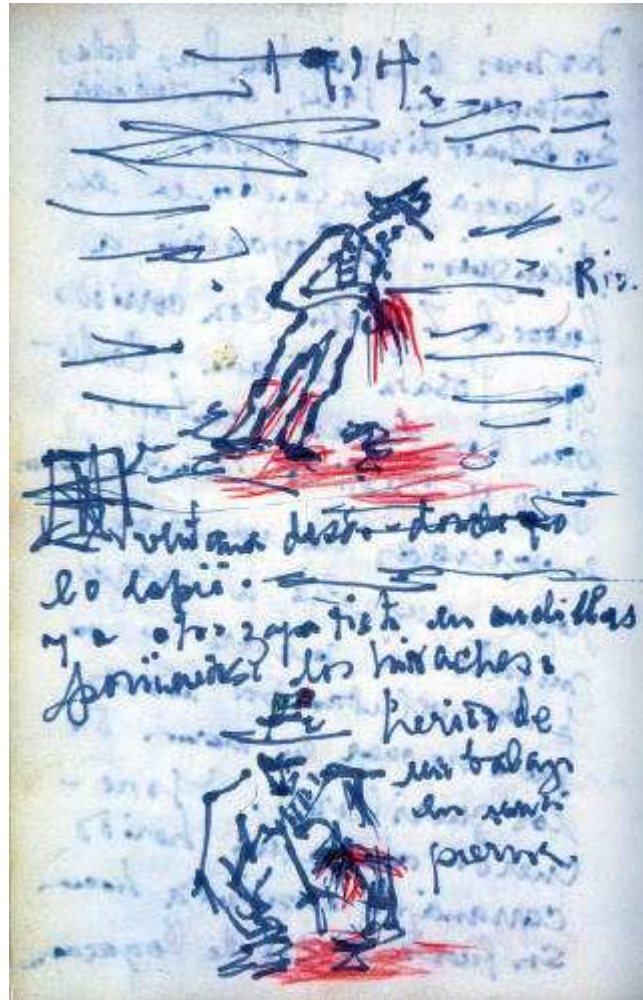


Los mis chisaban las balas
intensas en 1914. Sigotodas
Su extraordinario sonido.
Se hacia propasaudner el
-tianguis- de Coyoacan a
favor de Zapata. Con corridos
que Posada editaba. Costa-
ban los viernes 1 centavo.
Y yo y Cristi los cantabamos
encerrados en un gran
"pero que oia a noya.
mientras mi madre y mi
padre velaban por nosotros
para no caer en manos de
los guerrilleros. Y re-
cuerdo con a mi herido
camarada comiendo huan
en frente al rio de Coyoacan

the bullets just screeched past
then in 1914. I can still hear
their extraordinary sound.

They used to praise
Zapata in the Coyoacan
marketplace with songs
published by Posada. On Fri-
days they cost 1 cent
and Cristi and I would sing them
hiding in a big
wardrobe that smelled of walnut.
Meanwhile, my mother and

father watched over us
 so that we wouldn't fall into the hands of
 the guerillas. I remember a wounded
 Carrancista running toward
 his stronghold by the river in Coyoacan.



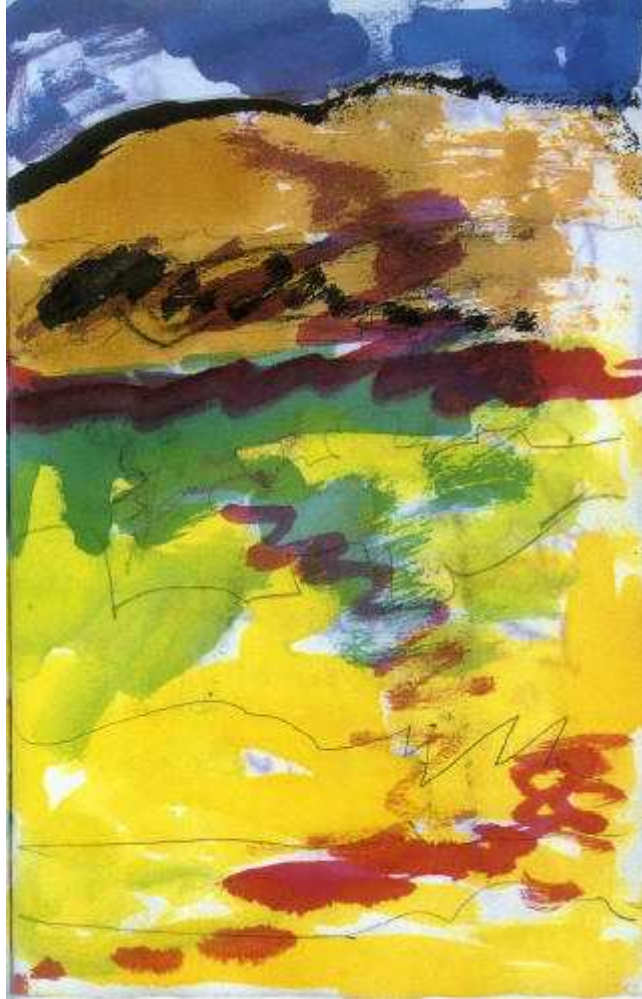
1914
 The window from where I
 spied him.
 and another Zapatista squatted
 to put on his "huaraches"
 wounded
 in one
 leg
 by a bullet.

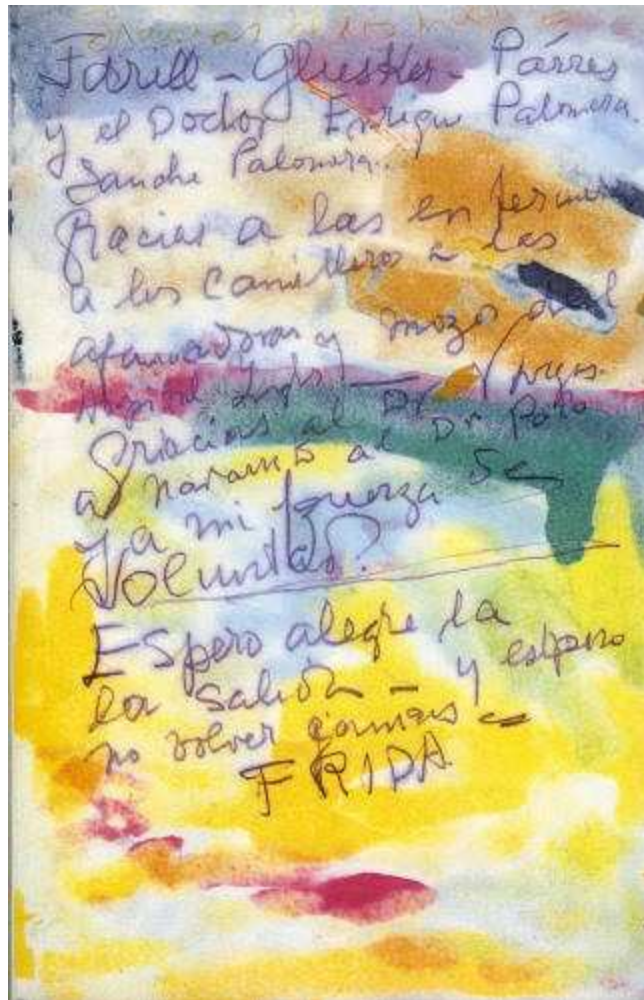
Ayer siete de Mayo de
 1953 al caerme en
 las baldosas de piedra
 se me introdujo en una
 nalga (algui de perro)
 una aguja. Me trajeron
 inmediatamente al Hospital
 en una ambulancia
 sufriendo enormes dolores
 y gritando en la distan-
 cia de casa al Hospital
 Ingles - me tomaron
 una radiografía - varios
 localizaron la aguja y
 me la van a sacar uno
 de estos días con un imán.
 Gracias a mi Diego
 amor de toda mi vida
 Gracias a los Doctores

Yesterday, the seventh of May
 1953 as I fell
 on the flagstones
 I got a needle stuck in
 my ass (dog's arse).
 They brought me
 immediately to the hospital
 in an ambulance.
 suffering awful pains
 and screaming all the
 way from home to the British
 Hospital - they took
 an X ray - several
 and located the needle and
 they are going to take it out one
 of these days with a magnet.
 Thanks to my Diego
 the love of my life
 thanks to the Doctors



with my love
to my
little boy
Diego
Diego





Thanks to the doctors
 Farill - Glusker - Parres
 and Doctor Enrique Palomera
 Sanchez Palomera
 Thanks to the nurses
 to the stretcher bearers to the
 cleaning women and attendants at the
 British Hospital -
 Thanks to Dr. Vargas
 to Navarro to Dr. Polo
 and to my will-
 power.
 I hope the
 exit is joyful - and I hope
 never to return -
 FRIDA









ENVOIOUS ONE







THE END

