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## MIGRATION ALGEBRA

M 1 - M 2 - M 3 - M 4 - M 5 \ C2xC3

Equals

A shit-load of concoctions, cocktails, cuckold cockamamie, and cockroach conquistadors

M1 is the migrant

M2 is the act of migration

M3 is the immigrant

M4 is the act of immigration

M5 is the barbed wire stretching across Mexico keeping brown skin on the other side C2  
is the Cuban squared, multiplied by C3, which is clearly the Cuban cubed

Have you ever played with your Rubik's cube while cubing carrots and dissecting  
Cubist, impressionist, cubby-hole, cabana-wear anywhere but at the beach?

If you're a White Cuban, add five points.

If you will say that Fidel urinated in your face, add another five points.

And if you will subscribe to the National Post and refuse to eat yucca,  
jackpot,  
add twenty points.

Re-cap:

Migration, immigration, re-location, dis-location, nation to nation, if you're a Haitian,  
talkin' about our generation,  
will not always come with air miles  
and chocolate kisses  
on freshly-fluffed, guest-room, pillows.

## HAY GENTE EXILADA

Hay 5 continentes  
Hay 212 países  
Hay 388 lenguas  
Hay más de mil millones de chinos  
Hay mil millones de indios  
Hay seiscientos mil africanos  
Hay más gente de color que gente blanca  
Hay gente rica que violó a gente pobre, y gente que se dice culta que forzó a otra gente a creer en un dios que no existe  
Hay mucha gente casada, con una esposa, otra con más, y otra con su amor del mismo sexo  
Hay gente que trabaja y gente que se queda en casa, gente que roba y otra que no paga impuestos  
Hay gente grande y flaca, y gente gorda y fuerte  
Hay gente anoréxica y bulímica, y gente que come solamente comida orgánica  
Hay gente rubia sin dientes, y gente morena sorda  
Hay gente feliz y gente triste, gente que vive en alegría y otra en miseria  
Hay gente carnívora y gente vegetariana, gente que come mucho y otra que se muere de hambre  
Hay gente que baila y gente que canta, gente que escribe y gente que lee, gente que toma y otra que fuma

Todos tienen bebés  
Todos tienen la misma sangre  
Todos tienen los mismos deseos  
Todos necesitan amor  
Todos viven para vivir a fin de sobrevivir  
Todos entienden la suerte del nacimiento  
Todos saben que la arrogancia de la crueldad de la explotación es universalmente la mierda

Hay gente exilada

Y

Todos

están aquí

## UN AMBIENTE BIEN TROPICAL

Pienso  
y reflexiono

sobre las mentiras  
que los abogados  
cuentan para ganar  
el caso,

las gentes que viven  
en la calle  
en pleno invierno  
en la ciudad mas rica  
de todo el pals,

en la felicidad  
de destruir  
su pasaporte

y

de mudarse lejos  
de aqui

a donde  
todo estaria  
disfrazado

de

un ambiente  
bien  
tropical.

## TODA LA FILOSOFIA DEL MUNDO

Tomar un baño en  
el océano,  
como dice el viejo proverbio,  
ahi donde el idioma  
no tiene acento,  
pero,  
no decimos que el amor  
no tiene  
idioma?  
Soy, luego,  
vivo, entonces,  
quiero, pero,  
deseo, quizás,  
toda la filosofia del mundo  
no podrá jamas  
separarnos  
aun cuando  
tu pasaporte  
cambie de  
color.

## GREED

All of the indicators indicate  
indices  
indicative  
of indulgent,  
indispensable ingrates,

poverty down,  
profits up,  
unemployment clown,  
housing starts up,  
crime down,  
exports up,

all of the think-tanks this side of Gander  
confronted with glazed eyes,  
smeared with the metamorphic molasses of January's gel,  
the squeaky wheel got the grease all right,  
the padded tax write-off keeping our values clean,

the untruncated beauty of  
greed aplenty

and that conservative/alliance/reform rump/stump/hump  
has still got a finger in the eye of the  
brown-skinned, calloused-hand, humbly humble  
exile escaping  
free-trade and globalized summits  
over yonder.

## MY BARBER AND FIDEL

My barber told me -

with the ruthlessness of an unfed shark being probed and baited, or the poor schmuck sent out with long sticks in icy foreign waters to club baby seals about the head in the hope of putting a meal on the table, when so-called enlightened folk in urban centres cry murder and spray-paint on the decadence wrapped around rich white ladies' necks-

that Fidel has six billion in the bank.

Hoping for some insight and wisdom as to how this lie could be true, he quickly boasted that he read it in the Enquirer, and maybe somewhere else,

and he doesn't much like despots, banana republics, agents of corruption or anti-democratic, self-aggrandizing, testosterone-mad egomaniacs who salivate at the thought of buckling their own kind over European-style wooden-slatted presses especially designed for the pigmentally-challenged,

and he belched noxious, gastric gases at the thought of some truncheon-wielding, tropical-fruit-slicing gang-leader who would brazenly wave a finger at his

unchallengeable, ultimate treatise of freedom, the one signed exclusively by slave-owners boasting how we is all very, very equal.

Of course, he didn't use any of those words, but the images he did spit out meant the same thing, and he was mad, pissed off, freaked out, kind of like Paul Martin when he discovered that the world found out that cold hard cash was pissing down on Canadian flags somewhere in Quebec in order to convince those who want to leave the country that a little good 'ole baksheesh, un pot de vin, a little grease on the palm, all of that transparent, accountable, ethical, a smidge smarmy, politrikin', as our Jamaican cohorts fume and exhale, would solve just about everything, and he was mildly sheepish when he understood that he was the guy who allocated the cash.

Anyway, this scissor-cutting guy was frothing at the mouth about this supposed electric-cable-to-the-testicles guy about whom nothing good could said, and who would rape his own people to live in the lap of luxury that no Cuban could ever dream of.

Or perhaps he was in a rage because he struggles every goddamn day of his life in our utopian bubble of a user-fee, sectarian paradise, paying taxes, listening to speeches about how much taxes have been cut, swaying to the congo-beat of electoral campaigns full of no more taxes, and swoonfully jiving to the orgasmic delight of no, absolutely not, no way, Jose, nada, niet, rien, ça c'est definitivement non, monsieur, read my lips, no more taxes, and then, magically, pool, watching rich folk not pay, sit back and light up that Cohiba, amigo, drumroll please, their taxes.

Maybe he doesn't like seeing his kids being maligned by the geyser of blissful joy

encapsulated in those wonderfully beguiling government policies. institutionalized, and ridiculed, but, nonetheless, policies that can be explained by vitriolic community radio left wing wing-nuts once the sound-bite veers off-course for a moment, little ditties that strangle the arteries intended to carry the blood through the system.

Fidel has nerve,  
he intonates, gesticulates, speculates, ultimately expectorates, and generally exhales with the harmony of a wolf trolling the frozen tundra on the chase after the lone, inevitably petrified little fox out for a Sunday-stroll,  
the red devil, communist traitor, who so brazenly struts his aging ideals in the world's coliseum, jammed with macho gladiators and the like,  
how evil it must be, this man of humble roots who shaves and prunes for the Canadian dream of renting a two-bedroom, one-bath, for life, conjectures,  
to live in a society with no air to breathe,  
the dreaded word that is about to spill from his lips, we all know,  
that unidimensional, you got to have lots of parties.  
like the supernatural Reform/Alliance/ Conservative/whatever Party,  
and Bruce Cockburn said that "and they call it democracy,"  
period, and lots of exclamation marks.

Can the poor Cubans talk,  
can they dance,  
can they learn,  
can they share a drink,  
can they, can they,  
can they live?  
question after question, but they weren't really questions,  
they were simply points that he thought would convince me  
that no place could be more rancid  
than my beautiful Cuba.

When talking to such a specialist, une eminence grise, albeit a little grisly around the bone, an utter authority,  
on history, politics, economics, culture and every other cognate discipline,  
one is careful to be, as our journalists are so proud to boast, objective.

Please sir, I want some more, like the trembling little fellow asking for another bowl of gruel in Oliver, is all that was required to hear this gentleman expound a type of animosity and vitriol that could not possibly stop at this limited diatribe.

No time to discuss the perfection of our society,  
as Chomsky does a crossword on Condoleeza's warplan,  
keep the natives dancing with drivel about sports and the like, and you won't have to get bogged down with the details, like conscription and murder.

Before long he outlines the methodology behind the madness, he proudly, and with the greatest amount of ignorance possible,  
states, and here the order is of absolutely no consequence,

that he has never been to Cuba,  
he has never met anyone who has been to Cuba,  
he has never met a Cuban,  
he has never read a Cuban newspaper or any word printed on Cuban paper,  
he has never seen the island of Cuba on a map, a website, or a CNN special news bulletin, he  
will not drink rum in fear that a Cuban may have touched the bottle,  
and, magically, he shops, whenever possible, on the other side of the border because the  
Americans are our friends, O.K., stay tuned, fire in the streets of Buffalo, news at eleven.

Finish this haircut before my brain seeps out of my ears,  
before every e-mail message I have ever sent collides in cyberspace,  
smashing my computer to bits,  
making me want to grab a bottle of any alcoholic beverage,  
and funnel it into my now entirely-vulnerable immune system,  
hoping to wash away the miserable tattoo that this probably well-intentioned guy is  
stamping on my mind,  
like the way they used to set up the plate for printing presses in the olden days.

All the cheap pop-psychology I've ever come across,  
pick your battles, don't sweat the little ones, every  
long march starts with one small step, boils to the  
surface.  
could our media have done such an tremendous job that this working-class alumnus is  
now beyond reproach?  
if education is our only chance at meaningful social change,  
I'm not sure we've won the battle.

Before that little shaving-brush with the soft White bristles can wipe away the hair  
ringing my collar,  
he feels so comfortable as to offer one last gem,  
he's on a roll, and somehow, it was no surprise,  
to hear of how Cuban ballplayers only play for the green.  
that Fidel is ungrateful and ungracious and simply aggravated by the fact that his players  
prefer the market-place,  
the same trickle-down, equal opportunity, bastion of freedom that prevents him,  
the enlightened, liberated, supreme democrat, the same guy voting for tax-cuts,  
from being able to buy a ticket for the home-team,  
at the gleaming, retractable-roof, private-boxed, taxpayer-paid-with-deliciously-tax-  
deductible-tax-cuts stadium  
right here.

## READING THE NEWS

And now the wisdom to be imparted on you,  
it don't matter however blue,  
it's all right here,  
sit down, have a beer.

You watch me,  
I'll set you free,  
you gotta work,  
don't you smirk.

This is the news,  
time to take a snooze,  
let me read it loud,  
your head ain't nothing but a cloud.

Focus your eyes,  
put on that disguise,  
make that meal,  
this is the real deal.

Don't you think,  
there is a link,  
between your action,  
and this contraction.

I said it's all true,  
I am the guru,  
this image is where it is at,  
no matter what you think of this or that.

The script is crisp,  
you may have a lisp,  
it's moving real fast,  
it has now gone past.

You look so good,  
like some antique wood,  
reading like a figurine,  
stuck out in the latrine.

Your regard is serious,  
the tone delirious,  
why I watch you,  
is to cook the evening stew.

Nicely coiffed,  
like the ceiling in my loft,

you are the quickest half hour,  
I ever need to sour.

Mr. Newsman,  
who can,  
with your fancy swagger,  
numb my thoughts like the last dagger.

## THE ECONOMIC ONE

We should be so grateful,  
not hateful, ever so faithful,  
number one, once again,  
no pain, much gain, so vain.

The world has adjudicated,  
no one is emaciated,  
we'll eat our steak,  
one big coffee break, no mistake.

The methodology. you say,  
no effect or defect, one big display,  
who lives so well?  
our friends at Taco Bell, military personnel?

Our native brothers and sisters,  
are they blisters, twisters, simply resisters?  
who fits the economic equation?  
must you be Caucasian, hell-bent on tax evasion?

The women, victims of abuse,  
chocolate mousse, no excuse,  
quantify, merge and take over,  
the pyramid of power, unsightly, so sour.

The unemployed and homeless,  
one happy family, what dysfunctional distress,  
the economy, is it a mess?  
without redress, but lots of finesse.

The U.N. says we're the best,  
we have the treasure chest, indeed obsessed,  
feeling uplifted, better than the rest.  
pass the bulletproof vest, we are possessed.

Faintly between the lines,  
the sun only periodically shines,  
praise the economic analysis,  
farewell to our social paralysis.

## THEY

They, the big ominous ultra-right right.  
They came, and They came again, and They wouldn't leave, until  
They got what They came for.  
What did They come for?  
Never ask a question you might not want to know the answer to, They  
sometimes say,  
and so no one asked.  
And They like it when no one asks.

They are still coming, and They will not leave.  
They have taken the women.  
They did it in ways that are not always gentle.  
They took coal and gold and silver and platinum and lots of uranium.  
They especially like oil.  
They came, and They spilt blood.  
Then They drank vulgar liquid, and spread disease.  
Then They forced the model, the most swiftly objectionable, spineless one and only,  
the spiritless, money-back guarantee,  
shut your goddamn mouth,  
money is money is money,  
por favor, Senor Romero,  
pity the poor who remain so pitifully poor,  
yea, that's it, that's the model.  
And They did it, hard, and with truncheons about the face,  
and slick leather boots squarely ensconced to the groin.  
And They made it hurt, but They especially made it last.  
And They forced those do-gooders to do it,  
as forcefully as they could, against their own people.  
And where, where, you bleeding-heart poet fool.  
could this utopian, existential fantasy reside,  
They would spit out.

And They would hawk disdain and mucous-covered tuberculosis  
thicker than the film covering life itself.  
They would take those babies, those harmless, giggling little chipmunks,  
and they would pound the teeth out of their moms and dads  
because they were the lecherous, vile, repugnant, shit-eating communists.  
They did this dance on the face of us all,  
they did it on our graves, on our backs,  
on those hands spent cultivating volcanic ash  
to make the more transparent, pigmentally challenged swank-set  
beautiful porcelain teacups, rimmed with gold.  
And They made sure that those without could not read  
but it never stopped anyone from reading the truth.  
They did it. They did it again.

They did it

over there.  
in ARGENTINA, 1890  
in CHILE, 1891  
in HAITI, 1891  
in NICARAGUA, 1894  
in PANAMA. 1895  
in NICARAGUA, 1896  
in PUERTO RICO, 1898  
in NICARAGUA, 1898  
in NICARAGUA, 1899  
in PANAMA, 1901  
in HONDURAS, 1903  
in DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, 1903  
in CUBA. 1906  
in NICARAGUA, 1907  
in HONDURAS,1907  
in PANAMA, 1908  
in NICARAGUA, 1910  
in HONDURAS, 1911  
in CUBA,1912  
in PANAMA, 1912  
in HONDURAS.1912  
in NICARAGUA,1912  
in MEXICO, 1913  
in DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, 1914  
in MEXICO, 1914  
in HAITI, 1914  
in DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, 1916  
in CUBA, 1917  
in PANAMA, 1918  
in HONDURAS, 1919  
in GUATEMALA, 1920  
in HONDURAS, 1924  
in PANAMA, 1925  
in EL SALVADOR, 1932  
in URUGUAY, 1947  
in PUERTO RICO, 1950  
in GUATEMALA, 1954  
in PANAMA, 1958  
in CUBA, 1961  
in CUBA. 1962  
in PANAMA, 1964  
in DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, 1965  
in GUATEMALA, 1966  
in CHILE, 1973  
in EL SALVADOR, 1981  
in NICARAGUA, 1981  
in HONDURAS, 1983  
in GRENADA, 1983  
in BOLIVIA, 1986

in PANAMA, 1989  
in HAITI, 1994  
in who knows where else

And when They did it, They didn't stop doing it.  
They stayed and sprayed.  
They milked the one decrepit, fly-infested livestock, which could hardly qualify as such.  
They made sure that not one drop dropped on the lips of those children, the same glowing  
eyes we saw here,  
who scour the streets looking for glue to forget that they are children.

They don't like unions, the scourge of all freedom,  
and They will bust up the landscape for fruit companies  
if They think you re got some scummy manifesto up your sleeve.  
Don't try and do what They do or They will be forced, without choice, at gunpoint,  
using taxpayer-funded satellite images  
to lightly baste, then fry, and, finally, conveniently, como se dice?, disappear you.  
Those who corrupt are there, and They have made it clear that only They will decide  
when those without will magically determine when it will end.

They wrote history,  
and They decried the hymns sung out from the mountaintops of misty, clarion peeks,  
overlooking the same bewildered nature that keeps us on the same string. They know that  
They have done what They have done.  
They are sipping brandy, using silky-smooth metaphors  
and twirling semantics and arrogant, haughty hypotheses  
reclining romantically in their leather-backed chairs,  
and They smile at death,  
but They never taste it.

## CAMINO COMO UN BAMBINO

Camino como un bambino

y

grito como un frito-bandido

y yo pienso, al menos, creo,  
es decir que hago la ilusion  
o el engano, o la proyeccion,  
o la estimacion, entonces, la coyuntura,  
del pronostico de la dinamica

para indicarme que

todo

sin cuestión

todo, todo, todo

incluyendo

los átomos, el aire, el agua  
cada anuncio jamas anunciado

no es igual  
Dios mio!  
al

Babaloo

NO HAY AQUÍ

Quien dice  
todavía  
De dónde eres?

Tu cara  
lamina linda  
morenite  
suave y dulce

trabajando  
por cacahuets  
pero con estilo

que añada  
a la paella  
sobre la mesa

que no obliga  
a reconocer

tu cara  
latina linda  
morenita  
suave y dulce

y que  
no hay aqui  
sin ti

