

## The Terror of Clean

That space between  
a *limpieza* and sweeping your kitchen  
with a dirty broom, clogged with hair and dustmites is  
very, very small, or so they would have you believe.

List of items in a cleaning kit:

1. broom
2. soap
3. brillo
4. *machete*
5. Kalashnikov Modernized Automatic Rifle (AKM) or IMI Galil
6. shovel

It is Colombia, it is the 1990s, it is now.

The scrape of nation-building  
rendering pillage heroic by  
a placid discourse of bourgeois mediocrity:  
the exceptional or eccentric is dangerous,  
did you not hear? Did you not learn it from the inception of  
your breathing?

Aporophobia: fear of and contempt towards people who live in poverty.

And these are the disposables, the unwanted, the extraneous bodies, unprofitable,  
irrelevant to the march of silver and gold, the laborious privileges of citizenship,  
these are the ones who will catch the intention of lavish purges  
and be forced to swallow ammo too big for the throat.

Kill list for Mano Negra, the elusive yet pervasive hand of death,  
another piece of the putrid machinery that governs, that declares from the pit of unchurched holy  
taking, all the sins in their deadliness:

1. Foundlings, those with no nest, the homeless. Poverty is a sin. Sloth is a sin.
2. Nightwalkers selling their tongues like wares. Sex outside marriage is a sin.
3. False eyelashes and skirts on a cock-strut, Transgender, Transvestite, Transgressing bodies in a militarized culture. Deviation from masculinity is a sin.
4. Faggots and *lesbianas*. Homosexuality is a sin.
5. Human Rights Activists. Speaking out is a sin. Anti-imperialism is a sin.
6. Skin the color of earth and sunless hours. Refusing assimilation is a sin.
7. Mothers and daughters. Mourning is a sin. Remembering is a sin.

Police with their muddy heels in stirrups on badged horses  
talk their talk of cleaner streets, boasting of revelatory  
enterprise, bastion cities of order, security sacrosanct,

so the suits can take trains without trouble  
and the young women of El Poblado, Comuna 14  
can walk their unblemished cheeks and poodles down the  
sidewalks without risking

the tainted guilt of beggarly hands  
or the unfamiliar succulence of arousal,

we are the vermin here.

We are the edged blades of fallen yearning,  
struck as with lightning and thunder  
for all the labyrinthine meanderings of our days  
away from the death of a thrust docility,

and we pay for our refusal of purity,  
we pay for the distress of their daughters' lips  
reaching for ours at sunset in the parks littered  
with deviants, our deviations carrying their discomfort,

we pay for not being able to pay, we pay for having been  
boys who wore their mothers' heels when she was away  
working her third job in one twirl of the sun, we pay for  
letting our nucleus grieve, for clipping our roses for hawking  
in moonlit markets, for fighting the deepest  
fight we can muster in the face of oblivion and contempt, for

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Watch out, they will  
sweep you into the gutter  
and bury you with all the refuse,  
tattered clothing, scrap metal, broken radios  
of a convoluted wartime sensibility  
in the afterglow of an immaculate sterility,

leaving your teeth to shine in the rain