



WCW's notes for his talk at the
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William Carlos Williams
By Word of Mouth

POEMS FROM THE SPANISH
1916-1959

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A NEW DIRECTIONS BOOK

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ODA A LOS CALCETINES

Me trajo Maru Mori
un par
de calcetines
que tejió con sus manos
de pastora,
dos calcetines suaves
como liebres.
En ellos
metí los pies
como en
dos
estuches
tejidos
con hebras del
crepúsculo
y pellejo de ovejas.

Violentos calcetines,
mis pies fueron
dos pescados
de lana,
dos largos tiburones
de azul ultramarino
atravesados
por una tranza de oro
dos gigantescos mirlos,
dos cañones:
mis pies
fueron honrados
de este modo
por

ODE TO MY SOCKS

Maru Mori brought me
a pair
of socks
that she knitted with her own hands
of a shepherdess,
two soft socks
you'd say they were rabbits.
In them
I stuck my feet
as in
two
jewel cases
woven
with threads of
twilight
and lamb skins.

Violent socks,
my feet were
two fish
made of wool,
two long sharks
of ultramarine blue
shot
with a tress of gold
two gigantic blackbirds,
two cannons:
my feet
were honored
in this manner
by

estos
celestiales
calcetines.
Eran
tan hermosos
que por primera vez
mis pies me parecieron
inaceptables
como dos decrepitos
bomberos, bomberos
indignos
de aquel fuego
bordado,
de aquellos luminosos
calcetines.

Sin embargo
resistí
la tentación aguda
de guardarlos
como los colegiales
preservan
las luciérnagas,
como los eruditos
coleccionan
documentos sagrados,
resistí
el impulso furioso
de ponerlos
en una jaula
de oro
y darles cada día
alpiste

these
celestial
socks.
They were
so beautiful
that for the first time
my feet seemed to me
unacceptable
like two decrepit
firemen, firemen
unworthy
of that embroidered
fire,
those luminous
socks.

Nevertheless
I resisted
the acute temptation
to keep them
as schoolboys
keep
fireflies,
or the erudite
collect
sacred documents,
I resisted
the furious impulse
to put them
in a cage
of gold
and to feed them
every day

y pulpa de melón rosado.
Como descubridores
que en la selva
entregan el rarísimo
venado verde
al asador
y se lo comen
con remordimiento,
estiré
los pies
y me enfundé
los
bellos
calcetines
y
luego los zapatos.

Y es ésta
la moral de mi oda:
dos veces es belleza
la belleza
y lo que es bueno es doblemente
bueno
cuando se trata de dos calcetines
de lana
en el invierno.

—Pablo Neruda

bird seed
and the pulp of rosey
melon.
Like discoverers
who in the forest
yield the very rare
green deer
to the spit
and with regret
eat it,
I stretched out
my feet
and pulled over them
the
beautiful
socks
and
then my shoes.

And this is
the moral of my ode:
twice beautiful
is beauty
and what is good is twice
good
when it is two socks
made of wool
in winter.

*W adds his
break*

✓
*allit sub for
Sp rhyme*