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Sierra Madre Prose

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SIERRA MADRE PROSE

Sat in the back of a second class bus
and watched

dusty Mexican towns with dirt streets

Women in long, multicolored skirts
and shawls

Through the swinging doors,
Men sitting in saloons
the fans, suspended from the ceiling,
moving just as slow as the drinkers

(some are singing.)

Men, with two hundred year old faces,
pulling their carts down sun
hard clay streets.

little girls selling
little girls watching me
a little girl in the middle of
the store floor, playing,
quietly, talking to herself

farther inland, the land rises

Villages full of burros and
barefoot children running to meet
the bus and sell fruit, tortas, and hand-made goods,
cheaply.

No clay houses, just stilt houses
with thatched roofs. Some hidden
by scarce desert forest.

All in twilight, tired and big
and rolling back towards
the mountains, over dry, brown
hills.

I saw the mountains,
miles of shrubbery running
faster and faster and then
leaping towards the sky in
great grey mountains
surmounting the earth

a five year old senoretta lying on
my lap, shared with a friend.
that same senoretta sleepily
grab my arm, pull herself
up, look into the
mountain night, nodding,
and then crawl down from the window.

and darkness coming, covering my view
and leaving me to look at
that sleeping child on my lap, clutching
my jacket as a pillow.

