

IN A SPANISH SCHOOLYARD

When the sun escapes the schoolyard
Juan comes to sweep the dirt in place
and to lower the volleyball net
(strange gift from the 6th Fleet)

unlike his father who fished Mallorca
when fish exceeded turistas, and Franco;
always the mind of Juan tumbling back
to the bells, the Sisters half-way

into Heaven as they leap for the ropes,
the soldiers pissing in the fountain,
grinning brown air at smiling priests
who have been grinning ever since;

always the mind of Juan cursing
death about the dark schoolyard
securing the ghosts of children,
his old hips singing with keys,

the American ladies passing by,
charmed to be Ali Baba brown,
charmed to peek in at Juan,
charmed all Spain is at work;

always the mind of Juan muttering
of his people—dead his friends,
dead the young chicos who fear Franco,
dead Spain fearing the death of Franco.