

Jose Diaz Claramont

from patrons 2 m-16.

I wanna tell my story that begun at the sea a long, long time ago,
when our gods were the harvest-moon, the sun-king, and the
names of women immortalized the fragrance and beauty of
flowers; men the forest-timber—or the color of azure sky.

One day the white men came, brought with them heaven and hell.
Baptized were we by them and we got names like Pedro, Jose,
Maria, after those saints carved in wood or stone, at glorious
cathedrals, before the plaza.

One day they lost at sea.

Again at the sea, they arrived—different white men with steel ships,
with long guns, with cowboy hats, with fighter planes, with books
and books. Their attire had the color of our virgin jungle, whose
tall trees, wild ferns and flowers camouflaged their forbidden caves.

They called our girls Mary—or hon, often baby, when they are
on R&R, sitting and enjoying the sun at our town square (I mean plaza)
in torn Levis jeans, igniting Marlboro with Zippo lighters that
clicked like hand-grenade's pin, aimed to the speaker at the podium.

We ain't know who really we are. We lost everythin at the sea.
Only the strong scent of jasmine, at the altar of our Lady of Miraculous
immortalizes a farmer ripped by slugs at picket line.