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The Wrong End of Goodman Street

Laura D. Nolasco
St. John Fisher College

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The Wrong End of Goodman Street

Cover Page Footnote

"Faculty Award" Appeared in the issue: Volume 7, Issue 1, 2006.

LAURA D. NOLASCO

THE WRONG END OF GOODMAN STREET

¡Ay qué rico!

It was my destino to get lost and stay lost
and to drive down the wrong end of Goodman Street
away from the posh Park Avenue cafés
where once I sat
a silent, painted trophy at your side
sipped cappuccino
and sighed at passers-by.

You of the infallible star and crescent,
even more almighty than the God
you say you pray to
five times a day,
had your chance to save me
from the seedy side of Goodman Street
but gracias a Dios
you left me all those boxes
full of Spanish books
and to hell with the dining room set,
the couch and the three chests of drawers.

One night we really did get lost
and drove away from the ritzy end
of Goodman Street
past all those little stores
with names like Sana'a Market and Queen Stop
y tú te sacaste de la casilla
I never saw anyone's cage
rattled more than yours.

Ay por Dios
what good are all your framed diplomas
on the wall
when you look down your hooked, hawk-like nose
at all these darker dwellers
in the inner city of your mind?¹

Those you crushed under your
all-powerful heel shod with the finest

those cinnamon-skinned mothers
who work in all those little stores
because they refuse to go on welfare
and their cabecita rizada daughters
who wonder how I got such soft, straight hair—
gather round as reggaeton blares
from my little silver Nissan
your poisoned gift.

Any day I expect you to flag us down
get him the hell out of the passenger seat
he's black!
but then again
what in God's name would you,
in your Christian Dior suits
I never bothered to learn to press,
be doing on the wrong end
of Goodman Street?

¹ During the Gulf War of 1991, Dr. Emil Homerin of the University of Rochester stated that Arabs and Muslims “dwell in the slums of our mind.”

ELIAS VAN SON

L'ARTISTE

while i may spread my arms and smile,
i wish and wait for more brilliant wings.
and l'Artiste pulled the sun from the morning sea,
but i slept while this was happening.
the sparrow's songs still birth inside my mouth,
yet they find no voice with which to sing.
and i might share my mother's eyes,
but she sees jesus christ in everything.