

Cockburn Bruce

"Nicaragua 447"

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breakfast woodsmoke on the breeze --
on the cliff the u.s. Embassy
frowns out over managua like dracula's tower.
the kid who guards fonseca's tomb
cradles a beat-up submachine gun --
at age fifteen he's a veteran of four years of war
proud to pay his dues
he knows who turns the screws
baby face and old man's eyes

blue lagoon and flowering trees --
bullet-packed masaya streets
full of the ghosts of the heroes of monimbo
women of the town laundry
work and gossip and laugh at me --
they don't believe i'll ever send them the pictures i
took.
for every scar on a wall
there's a hole in someone's heart
where a loved one's memory lives

in the flash of this moment
you're the best of what we are --
don't let them stop you now
nicaragua

sandino in his tom mix hat
gazes from billboards and coins
"sandino vive en la lucha por la paz"
sandino of the shining dream
who stood up to the u.s. marines --
now washington panics at u2 shots of "cuban-style"
latrines

in the flash of this moment
you're the best of what we are --
don't let them stop you now
nicaragua

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