

Robert Earl Keen "Mariano"

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The man outside he works for me, his name is Mariano
He cuts and trims the grass for me he makes the
flowers bloom
He says that he comes from a place not far from
Guanajuato
That's two days on a bus from here, a lifetime from this
room

I fix his meals and talk to him in my old broken Spanish
He points at things and tells me names of things I can't
recall
And sometimes I just can't but help but wonder who this
man is
And if when he is gone will he'll remember me at all

I watch him close he works just like a piston in an
engine
He only stops to take a drink and smoke a cigarette
When the day is ended, I look outside my window
There on the horizon, Mariano's silhouette

He sits upon a stone in a south-easterly direction
I know my charts I know that he is thinking of his home
I've never been the sort to say I'm in to intuition
But I swear I see the faces of the ones he calls his own

Their skin is brown as potters clay, their eyes void of
expression
Their hair is black as widow's dreams, their dreams are
all but gone
They're ancient as a vision of a sacrificial virgin
An innocent as crying from a baby being born

They hover around a dying flame and pray for his
protection
Their prayers are all but answered by his letters in the
mail
He sends them colored figures that he cuts from strips
of paper
And all his weekly wages saving nothing for himself

It's been a while since I have seen the face of Mariano

The border guards they came one day and took him far
away
I hope that he is safe down there at home in
Guanajuato
I worry though I read there's revolution every day

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