

# Havana Ghazal

**RIO CORTEZ**

Moths fly in the open window during the night while it rains.  
Piles of letters addressed to my mother, not one will I send to her.

Mold spreads under the floorboards, dusts my lungs in the night.  
The neighbor prays to a Black San Lázaro to comfort her.

Vultures circle Hotel Habana Libre in broad daylight.  
Cira wants to know how to say "I love you" in English, so I tell her.

Coconut ice cream for sale on every corner at December.  
Havana surrounds herself with walls, but so many come inside her.

Bats stuck in the palm leaves outside the terrace ledge.  
A Santero falls into the trance of Ochun, after all, he belongs to her.

Some say the patroness of the island isn't really a white virgin, but  
a woman so dark, after sunset, not even God notices her.