

EDDY AND DALILA

I

EIGHT MONTHS PREGNANT
NINE MONTHS A COUPLE
TWO MONTHS IN OUR *ALBERGUE*

YOU CAME IN CLAIMING
BROTHER AND SISTER
WERE SEPARATED WHEN WE FOUND OUT
THAT WAS A LIE
NOW YOU SEE EACH OTHER BRIEFLY IN THE AFTERNOONS

"I MISS HER," YOU SAY.
YOU TELL ME SHE LIKES *SOPA DE LETRAS*
SO I PRINT SOME FOR YOU TO GIVE HER

YOU SIT NEXT TO EACH OTHER
AND SIMPLY TALK

II

TODAY,
WITHOUT WARNING,
DALILA IS IN HER ROOM
PEINÁNDOSE AND PACKING HER BAGS
JUST MINUTES AWAY
FROM WALKING OUT OF OUR DOORS

AND YOUR LIFE

IF IT WASN'T FOR A WARY FRIEND
SHE WOULD'VE VANISHED
WITHOUT THE CHANCE TO SAY GOODBYE

WE SCRAMBLE TO GET THE OK
TO BRING YOU BACK TO SEE HER

THANKFULLY,
IT'S A YES

III

YOU'RE OUT IN PE WHEN WE FIND YOU,
READY TO START THE DAILY GAME OF *FUTBÓL*

WITHOUT EXPLANATION
I ASK YOU TO FOLLOW ME

HOW DO I EXPLAIN WHAT IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN?

WE DON'T HAVE THE MEANS HERE
TO CARE FOR A NEW MOM
OR PROVIDE FOR YOUR UNBORN SON

SHE HAS TO GO.

IV

WHEN YOU SEE HER,
YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT IS HAPPENING
YOU PUT YOUR HANDS ON HER BELLY
AND CRY

YOU ASK, "LA PUEDO ABRAZAR?"
I'LL NEVER FORGET THAT YOU ASKED FIRST
YOU WHISPER SOMETHING TO EACH OTHER IN SPANISH
(OR MAYBE MAM?)

FINALLY
SHE BREAKS YOUR EMBRACE
AND WALKS AWAY
BLACK *COLITA* MARKING TIME
ON HER PREGNANT STRIDE

YOU SPIN AROUND
FISTS AGAINST THE WALL
HEAD LOWERED
AND YOU WEEP

WHILE SHE BOARDS THE VAN
TO AN UNKNOWN FUTURE

Footnote: This young lady was transferred to another shelter with programming for new moms and babies so she could safely give birth to and learn to care for her child. The young man, after much urging from those managing his case, was later transferred to a nearby shelter and given visitation privileges.