Quando nasci, um anjo torto
desses que vivem na sombra
disse: Vai, Carlos, ser gauche na vida.

As casas espia os homens
que correm atrás das mulheres.
A tarde talvez fosse azul
não houvesse tantos desejos.

O bonde passa cheia de pernas:
pernas brancas pretas amarelas.
Para que tanta perna, meu Deus, pergunta meu coração.
Porém meus olhos
não perguntam nada.

O homem atrás do bigode
é sério, simples e forte.
Quase não conversa.
Tem poucos, raros amigos
o homem atrás dos óculos e do bigode.

Meu Deus, por que me abandonaste
se sabias que eu não era Deus
se sabias que eu era fraco.

Mundo mundo vasto mundo
se eu me chamasse Raimundo
seria uma rima, não uma solução.
Mundo mundo vasto mundo,
mais vasto é meu coração.

Eu não devia te dizer,
mas essa lua
mas essa conhaque
botam a gente comovido como o diabo.
Poem of Seven Faces

trans. John A. Nist, 1965

When I was born, a twisted angel, one of those who live in the shadow, said: Go, Carlos! Be *gauche* in life.

The houses spy on men men chase after women. The evening might have been blue, Had there not been so many desires.

The streetcar passes by full of legs: white, black, yellow legs. My God, my heart asks, why so many legs?

And yet my eyes question nothing.

The man behind the mustache is serious, simple and strong. He seldom talks. He has a few, rare friends, the man behind the glasses and the mustache.

My Lord, why did you abandon me since you knew that I wasn’t God since you knew that I was weak.

World, world, vast world, if my name was Twirled it’d be a rhyme, it wouldn’t be a solution. World, world, vast world, even vaster is my heart.

I shouldn’t tell you but this moon but this cognac shake a person up like hell.


Seven-Sided Poem

trans. Elizabeth Bishop, 1969

When I was born, one of the crooked angels who live in shadow, said: Carlos, go on! Be *gauche* in life.

The houses watch the men men who run after women. If the afternoon had been blue, there might have been less desire.

The trolley goes by full of legs: white legs, black legs, yellow legs. My God, why all the legs? my heart asks. But my eyes ask nothing at all.

The man behind the moustache is serious, simple, and strong. He hardly ever speaks. He has a few, choice friends, the man behind the spectacles and the moustache.

My God, why hast Thou forsaken me If Thou knew’st I was not God, if Thou knew’st that I was weak?

Universe, vast universe, if I had been named Eugene that would not be what I mean but it would go into verse faster. Universe, vast universe, my heart is vaster.

I oughtn’t to tell you, but this moon and this brandy play the devil with one’s emotions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poem of Seven Facets</th>
<th>Seven Sided Poem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When I was born, a crooked angel, One of those who inhabit shadows, Said: Go Carlos! Be gauche in life.</td>
<td>When I was born, one of those crooked angels who live in shadow said: Go on, Carlos, be gauche in life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The houses look at men Who run after women. The afternoon might be clear If it weren’t for so many desires.</td>
<td>The houses look out on men chasing after women. If the afternoon were blue there might be less desire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The tram goes by, full of legs: Legs, white, black, yellow. My God! Why so many legs, my heart asks. My eyes however, Ask nothing.</td>
<td>The trolley passes full of legs: white, black, yellow legs. My God, my heart asks, why so many legs. But my eyes ask nothing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The man behind the moustache Is serious, simple and strong. Talks very little. He has few friends, The man behind the glasses and moustache.</td>
<td>The man behind the mustache is serious, simple, and strong. He hardly talks. He has few and precious friends, the man behind the glasses and the mustache.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My God, why did you abandon me When you knew I was no God When you knew I was too weak.</td>
<td>My God, why hast Thou forsaken me. Thou knewest I wasn’t God Thou knewest how weak I was.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World world vast Globe If my name was Job It would be a rhyme not a solution World world vast world My heart is vaster</td>
<td>World, wide world, if my name were Harold it might be a rhyme but no answer. World, wide world, my heart is bigger than you are.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I shouldn’t tell you But this moon This cognac Move me like the devil.</td>
<td>I shouldn’t tell you but this moon and this cognac are hell on a person’s feelings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Heptagonal Poem


When I was born, an unjust angel—one of those who dwell in the shades—said: Go forth, Carlos! Be *gauche* in life.

Houses spy on men who chase after women. The afternoon would perhaps be blue, were there not so many desires.

The streetcar passes full of legs: Legs white black yellow Why so many legs, good God, my heart asks. But my eyes ask not a thing.

The man behind the moustache is glum, simple and strong. He speaks almost not at all. His friends are few and far between the man behind the spectacles and moustache.

My God, why hast Thou forsaken me if Thou knewest I was not God if Thou knewest that I was frail.

World world wide world if my name were Harold ‘twould be a kind of rhyme, but no solution. World world wide world wider still my heart.

I really shouldn’t tell you this but that moon but that cognac turn me on like the very devil.


Poem With Seven Faces

rans. Virginia de Araújo, 1980

When I was born, a crooked angel the kind that lives in shadow said: Go, Carlos, be *gauche* in life.

The houses mount surveillance on the woman-chasers. Maybe if the afternoon were blue there would be fewer desires.

The trolley passes packed with legs: white legs, black and yellow ones. Why so many legs, my God, my heart asks. However my eyes raise no questions.

The man behind the mustache is serious, strong and simple. He hardly talks. He has few, precious friends the man behind the glasses and mustache.

My God, why hast Thou forsaken me knowing I wasn’t God knowing how weak I am.

Sphere sphere vast sphere if I were a sonneteer it would be a rhyme, not a solution. Sphere sphere vast sphere More vast is my emotion.

I oughtn’t to tell you but this moon but this cognac work on a man’s feelings like a devil.

When I was born, a crooked angel of the kind that lives in shadows said: Go, Carlos! be gauche in life.

The houses spy on men who chase after women. If the evening perhaps were blue, there wouldn’t be so many desires.

The street-car passes full of legs: white legs black yellow. Why so many legs, dear God, asks my heart. But my eyes don’t question a thing.

The man behind the mustache is serious, uncomplicated and strong. He almost never converses. He has few, very few friends with the man behind the glasses and the mustache.

My God, why have you abandoned me if you knew I wasn’t God, if you knew I was weak.

World so large, world so wide, if my name were Clyde, it would be a rhyme but not an answer. World so wide, world so large, my heart’s even larger.

I shouldn’t tell you, but this moon but this brandy make me sentimental as hell.
Poem of Seven Faces

trans. Anne Connor, 2016

When I was born, a crooked angel,
one of those who live in the shadow,
said: Go on, Carlos! be *gauche* in life.

The houses spy on men
who chase after women.
The afternoon might be blue
If there weren’t so many desires.

The trolley passes by full of legs:
legs white and black and yellow
Why so many legs, my God, asks my heart.
However my eyes
don’t ask a thing.

The man behind the mustache
is serious, simple and strong.
He almost never converses.
He has few, rare friends
the man behind the glasses and mustache.

My God, why did you abandon me
if you knew I wasn’t God
if you knew I was weak.

World world vast world
if my name were Earl
it would be a rhyme, but not a solution.
World world vast world,
more vast is my heart’s resolution.

I shouldn’t have told you,
but that moon
but that cognac
play the devil with one’s emotions.

Note from *Delos*: A concession has been made to symmetry in setting the original and translations of the “Poema de sete faces.” In each two-page spread, additional blank lines have been inserted between stanzas to allow the first lines of each stanza to align across the pages.