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Bitterness

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POETRY

CANTO GENERAL DE CHILE

(Fragment)

From the North, Almagro brought his wrinkled lightning.
And across the land, between thunder and quiet,
he leaned day and night as over a map.

Shade of thorns, ghost of wax and thistle,
the Spaniard stood again with his lean figure,
watching the exhausted strategies of earth.

Night, snow and sand shape the form
of my wasted fatherland,
silence stretched in its long line;
foam rises from the sea's face,
cinder covers it with mysterious kisses.

Like live coal gold burns in its fingers
and silver illumines, like a new moon,
its hardened shadow of a dark planet.

The Spaniard, having settled near the rose one day,
near oil, near wine, near ancient sky,
did not imagine this point of angry stone
rose from below, out of the dung of the sea eagle.

PABLO NERUDA

(From *Repertorio Americano*, and
translated by Joseph Leonard Grucci.)

BITTERNESS

Near the sea
it was, the bitter sea.
Lips made bitters