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## Kingsville, 1970

George Henson

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## Kingsville, 1970

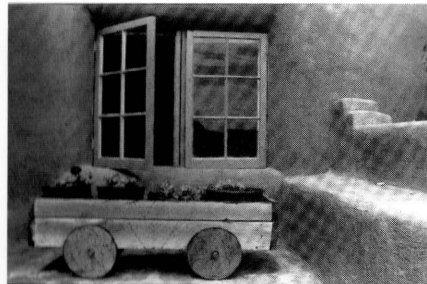
George Henson

*Éramos niños y nada más.*<sup>1</sup>

We ran down narrow *caliche*<sup>2</sup> streets,  
where passing Coca-Cola trucks raised clouds of dust,  
leaving in their wake *gritos y toses*<sup>3</sup>  
and stinging eyes, and bead necklaces  
around tiny sweat-soaked necks,  
necklaces that would disappear  
in every bathtub in the *barrio*<sup>4</sup> by 10 p.m.  
(That's 9 on school nights.)

Beneath flickering street lights and dancing fireflies  
we played *al escondite*<sup>5</sup>,  
hiding behind *el vecino*'s<sup>6</sup> Rambler bought new in 1965,  
*correteando*<sup>7</sup> between cookie-cutter houses  
and old beat-up garbage cans,  
stopping only long enough to buy *raspados*<sup>8</sup>  
at don Cenaide's *chiringuito*<sup>9</sup>  
on the corner of *la calle Ella*<sup>10</sup>,  
sometimes raspberry, *y a veces de fresa*<sup>11</sup>.

And while *los viejos*<sup>12</sup> played dominos  
and smoked cigars on front porches,  
*las abuelas*<sup>13</sup> swept the caliche dust  
that floated in through open windows  
from once-red linoleum floors,  
now faded from daily moppings  
with no *sé cuántos*<sup>14</sup> gallons of Clorox.  
It's funny how bleach erases everything but memories.



S. Starr

<sup>1</sup>We were children and nothing more.

<sup>2</sup>salt peter: used, instead of asphalt, as a road filler in barrio neighborhoods

<sup>3</sup>shouts and coughs

<sup>4</sup>neighborhood

<sup>5</sup>hide-and-seek

<sup>6</sup>the neighbor's

<sup>7</sup>running around

<sup>8</sup>snow cones

<sup>9</sup>stand

<sup>10</sup>Elle Street

<sup>11</sup>and sometimes strawberry

<sup>12</sup>the old men

<sup>13</sup>the grandmothers

<sup>14</sup>I don't know how many