

# Being a Poet in the Biggest Little City

Erik Manuel Soto

is waiting for stars to fall  
and become mosaic

trail paths where a lead-pierced duck

flails from the mouth

of an obeying dog.

Most hours however,

are neon lit cheekbones

of addicts abandoning sleep

in the long-scabbed streets shouting

for mercy, or in madness —

it's hard to tell really

when pomegranates are thrown

out of hotel windows

and your eyes tell you

glowing cigarettes in mouths passing

are suns being swallowed by Tezcatlipoca

and spat back out as salt.

Somewhere in the city

there is a canyon

of rotting limes bared

in the scar of a bartender's wrist.

Her rusting ring carrying  
a turquoise gem resurrected  
from the high-desert grounds.

Most hours are lost  
to constant vertigo  
the bruising kaleidoscopic blur  
in underground rave clubs  
the cold grit of bathroom sinks  
believing blow is holy  
if not, it's at least the moment  
before the bull charges  
towards the bullfighter.