

PRIOR TO THE TEA DANCE/ WISHES OF AN OLD GENTLEMAN

What can you tell me
If your lies I already know?
You see no life,
though it passes you constantly
in changing images.
"Mirror, mirror, on the wall..."
staring at pain -
unfeeling, unpossessed,
unhoping, unremembering...
Show me not wrinkles of time.
Talk to me, instead,
of ragtime,
aching quick steps
following a stubborn sound.
Tell me of her smile,
the cupper raised
as memories flow.
She, who will be there again,
she, "...the fairest of them all..."
"Mirror, mirror, on the wall."

Manuel L. Ponte - Bogotá, Colombia, October 30, 1972