

Hummingbird and skylark

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The subdivisions here have names
as foreign as their streets,
perhaps to summon dustless climes,
evergreen trees, cooler sunsets.

Bloomington. Puerta de Sol. Bellevue.
In the district where I live,
only two streets I manage to remember:
Hummingbird and Skylark.

The first is where I live, the second is
where Jenny lives. She peddles trinkets,
shawls and supplements; laughs
as only she could laugh then

as a matter of course I'd end up
buying items I don't need.
Despite her chirp, Jenny would end
up divulging the intimate sadness

of her life: her mother, paralyzed,
takes care of her kids. Her husband,
in her words "an inutile philanderer
who sells insect repellents."

Jenny wants to live life anew:
new shoes new house new husband.
Abroadabroad is a mantra calming
her afternoons when she goes

to the net downtown, wearing an
ecru blouse that silhouettes her bra.
"O, haven't found my man yet"
she'd tell me under her breath.



Her *man* is any man who badly wants
her, sends her money asap.
“They’ve become wais, the Amerikanos.
The Italians, their English is worse

than mine,” she’d say this
placing stresses in such a way
that her bird voice sings.
And then her eyes would light up:

“Oh Lord, the Asians are surprisingly
charming but so kuripot hahah.”
There’s a Thai she falls in love with.
But the poor man is literally poor.

That’s the way the story unfolds
or doesn’t for us both.
Then I leave Hummingbird to find
happiness in another city.

In my trip back home,
a starlet startles me at the airport.
Her face: all shades and attitude.
Her humongous shoes,

more than adding height,
emphasize her delicate proportions.
Her bare-faced grin reaches me
before I could even say “Jenny?”

O Lord, she looks truly happy.