

# Jovita Prays

by [Carlos Carreon](#) (June 2023)



*Two Old Pecan Trees*, Frank Nelson Wilcox, 1932

Pecan trees shade sidewalk  
branches tap one another  
in marigold morning  
September breeze

clack slapping pecans fall  
from their pungent, split dry pods  
bounce onto sprigs of grass, tall as aloe vera,  
onto garden hosed wet pavement,  
onto muddy loose gravel

neighbor from around corner  
picks up handfuls  
packs them into pale pink nylon *costales*,  
into empty pockets

He steps into dry weed rose bush bed  
where nuts lay under thorns  
like a nest of brown spotted house-finch eggs  
  
disregarding yard sign

*Por Favor*

*No Recoja Nueces*

Why is there a sign?  
Hand painted sign, dripping letters  
like on a mourning widow's cheek

*La viejita* who lives in this  
paint flaking house is crazy

*Señal ridícula: una cosecha tan abundante  
que ruega ser compartida*

Ridiculous sign—such bountiful crop  
begging to be shared

Besides, what is an old woman  
going to do with all these nuts?  
Pulling loaded wagon  
I'm doing her a favor  
She can't bend over  
She can't mow her lawn,  
*ni puede mantener un jardín*

*Ella es buena con la manguera*  
She's good at using garden hose.  
And off he goes.

In late afternoon

After reciting rosary prayers  
Our Fathers, Hail Marys and  
a *Por la señal de la Santa Cruz.*

*Jovita—Dueña de la casita*  
squeezes through doorway  
wicker basket between waist and forearm

Lavender floral terry cloth slippers  
She moves slowly under ramas.

Searches her yard, her garden,  
her sidewalk, the street in front of her home.

Shrugs, surrenders to stolen crop  
heads back to house

Beneath fluttering paper  
are seven pecans.

Gathering them with cupped hands,  
hands brown and spotted as shell,  
hands deeply creased as seed,  
inhales their earthy scent

Smiling—both upper front teeth missing  
pushes tongue out like a toothless baby.

Lifting pecans to forehead  
*Jovita* whispers "*Gracias a Dios.*"

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Carlos Carreon is a poet and short story writer. He has been featured several times in the Tejano Conjunto Festival program magazine and an anthology of short stories by Gemini Ink. He is a member of Voces Cósmicas poetry group and the San Antonio

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