

like Rosalba in them. At work I often waited on some girl who looked slightly like her, and I would be nasty, I would invent obstacles, look for some way to humiliate her in front of the other employees so I could feel, "I'm getting back at Rosalba."

You will ask me, Father, what Rosalba ever did to me. Nothing, really, as far as I can see. That was the worst thing, what made me the angriest. Remember, Father, she was always good and kind to

me. But she ruined my life, she made me less just by existing, by being so beautiful, so rich, so everything.

I know what hell must be like, Father. But, even so, people always get what's coming. That meeting must have been in 1946. So then I've waited a quarter of a century. And finally, Father, this morning I saw her on the corner of Madero and Palma. At first she was far off, but then I saw her up close. You wouldn't believe the sight, Father! that wonderful

body, face, legs, eyes, hair, were lost forever in a tub of lard, bags, spots, wrinkles, double chin, varicose veins, gray hair, make-up, blush, mascara, dentures, false eyelashes, inch-thick eyeglasses.

I hurriedly went to her and kissed and embraced her. What had separated us was past. Everything that came before didn't matter now. We would never be the pretty girl and the ugly one. Now Rosalba and I are alike. Now old age has made us the same. ■■■

JOSÉ EMILIO PACHECO

José Emilio Pacheco, novelist, short story writer, translator and editor, is one of the most outstanding and prolific writers of twentieth-century Mexican letters. Born in Mexico City June 30, 1939, Pacheco studied at the National Autonomous University of Mexico's Schools of Law and Philosophy and Letters. He went into publishing in 1956, making a name for himself particularly as managing editor of the magazines *Universidad de México* and *Diálogos*, as well as the "La Cultura en México" supplement of the daily newspaper *Novedades*, and as a writer for the cultural news program *Cine-Verdad* (Cinema-Truth).

His first book of poems, *Los elementos de la noche* (The Elements of the Night), was published in 1963, followed by *El reposo del fuego* (The Repose of Fire) (1966), *Irás y no volverás* (You Shall Go and You Shall Not Return) (1973), *Desde entonces* (Since Then) (1980), and *Miro la tierra* (I Look at the Ground) (1983), among others.

Part of his vast body of poems has been included in several anthologies, among them, *Ayer es nunca jamás* (Yesterday Is Never Ever) (1978), *Fin de siglo* (End of Century) (1984), *Alta traición* (High Treason) (1985) and *Selected Poems* (1987).

Among his books of short stories are *La sangre de Medusa* (The Blood of Medusa) (1958), *El viento distante* (The Distant Wind) (1963) and *El principio del placer* (The Pleasure Principle), for which he received the Xavier Villaurrutia Award for narrative in 1973. His most outstanding novels are *Morirás lejos* (You Will Die Far Away) (1967) and *Las batallas en el desierto* (Battles in the Desert) (1981), which has been translated into English, French, Russian, German and Greek.

Pacheco has published several anthologies, among them *La poesía mexicana del siglo XIX* (Mexican Twentieth-Century Poetry) (1965), *Antología del modernismo* (Anthology of Modernism) (1970), *Novelistas ingleses* (English Novelists) (1982) and *La novela histórica y folletinesca* (The Historical and Pamphleteering Novel) (1985).

Among the many works he has translated are *De Profundis*, by Oscar Wilde (1975) and *A Streetcar Named Desire*, by Tennessee Williams (1983).

During his long career, Pacheco has received many prizes and awards, like the Magda Donato Award (1967), the National Prize for Poetry (Aguascalientes, 1969), the Villaurrutia Award (1973) and the National Prize for Journalism (for the area of culture, 1980). In 1973 he and Arturo Ripstein shared an Ariel from the Mexican Cinema Academy for the best original script and the best film adaptation for the movie "The Castle of Purity."

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