

LINDA FRANK

## The Blue House

*Coyoacan, July 13, 1954*

Her mother had told her about the rain,  
 the opaque curtain of rain, relentless  
 outside the room where she was born  
 downstairs in this very house

And all her life she loved the rain  
 It watered her garden, bathed  
 the paving stones in the courtyard  
 washed her blue walls clean  
 She always slept in the room  
 she was born in, the one beside  
 her studio, and now she gazed through  
 the open doorway, losing herself once more  
 inside the rain, letting it blur the edges  
 of her pain, letting it lose her inside its torrent

She gave the house the name *Casa Azul*  
 It embraced her solitude, witnessed  
 her life. It held the rooms of her broken body  
 and the beds of her illness. On its walls  
 hung the mirrors of her revelation. Inside it,  
 she lived her art. And inside it, she always said,  
 she was dying

The house was as she always kept it  
 Outside a deep unyielding blue  
 Inside, the floors red for the colour of blood,  
 the walls yellow for madness and for sun and joy,  
 the wainscoting blue for distance, but for tenderness too

The windows and doors she left open  
to the rain and to the birds  
and to the people who always came

It rained for days after she died  
Inside the blue house, they placed  
her ashes and her death mask wrapped  
in a rebozo shawl on the centre of her bed