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## Grann / Grandma

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# Kochnov Jean-Noel

## Grann\*

Se par amou ki fe'm ekri ou,  
Ni pa douleur yon ekri ven.  
Me se pou'm encourage  
Un espace mwen presque bliye.

Langue sa a se pa lang pa'm.  
Pas bon kreyol, pa menm bosal.  
Banmewn yon chans, m'ta rele!  
Se pa akote jenou'w ke'm te apran.

Bel fanm kakou'w,  
Jèn fille ou te'y...  
Sa m'pap janm konnen.  
Pa ta rive pi pre qu'un image...

Petèt grenn je ti se'm  
Ki parèt kom nuit en Maissade.  
La lin kanpe, Rio Frio roule.

Mwen te reve ke'm ekri'w  
Men ou pat' konprann.  
Mwen te blige pale  
Men ou pat' tande.

Mwen te reziyenm comme on terre anba soleil brillant,  
Poum kite nati pran plas li:  
Je chèch, Coeur di.

Se menmenm ou pa rekonèt,  
Pitit pitit ou?  
Se menmenm ou pa konpran,  
Malgre couleur sa?

Et se la mwen wè  
Tout tan sa se mwen ki te bèbè.  
Mwenmen kite invisible.

“Pas bay kò ou pwoblèm poumwen,  
Ce mwen menm ki ta dwe parle non paw.”

Se pat pou amour ki mwen ekri’w,  
Se sim santi ke’m pas capable.

## Grandma

It is not love that makes me write to you,  
Nor a writer's pains.  
But that I could encourage  
A space that I've all but forgotten.

This tongue's not mine.  
Not proper Kreyol, not even raw.  
Grant me a chance, I'd shout!  
It was not at your knees that I learned.

Beautiful woman as you.  
The girl you were...  
This I'll never know.  
Can't get much closer than an image...

Perhaps my sister's eye  
Appearing as night in Maissade.  
Moon stands still, Rio Frio rolls on.

I dreamt that I wrote to you  
But understand you did not.  
I was obliged to speak  
But hear you could not.

I was resigned as earth beneath harsh sun  
To allow nature its place:  
Dry eyed, hard hearted.

It is me that you do not recognize,  
The child of your child?  
It is me that you do not understand,  
Despite this color!

And this is where I see  
All this time it was I that was mute.  
I that was invisible

“Do not trouble yourself for me,  
It’s I that ought speak your name.”

It is not for love that I write you,  
It’s if I feel that I cannot.

\* Grammatical errors in Kreyol version are intentional.