

# Alonzo Cruz

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"Once a week he comes to the portalis or sidewalk cafe that borders the city square and sings his songs for his many local friends. The occasional peso (8¢) he charges is less than the usual fee of the Mariachi, the street musicians of Mexico. . .and would hardly keep him in guitar strings.

"He sits at a table, a glass of beer or Tequila before him, sings his heart out,---and charms everyone within earshot. Senor Cruz was much impressed by the tape recorder, especially as he had never heard his voice recorded."

So wrote wandering photographer John Goldston early this spring. He sent us some of his Mexican tape mementos with a warm note---"they ought to be good for an afternoon of nostalgia anyway. . ."

The incredibly pure voice of Alonzo transformed that afternoon from one of casual listening to the making of this record. It was as if the sweeping romanticism of the blind troubadour of Oaxaca summed up the troubadour tradition of all places --- and of Latin settings in particular. Whatever his song -- folk or popular -- it becomes a serenade as would be sung to the "beautiful woman behind the latticed window."

## his songs

### SIDE A:

1. "My limited handbook-Spanish was hardly up to obtaining detailed information about the songs. Dose Cascabeles was taped in a bar. This is a spirited ranchero (riding song) - the waiters supplying the hoofbeat effect with match boxes, glasses and tapping a comb on Alonzo's guitar. (No Mexican can stand hearing another Mexican make music without making just a little himself.)"

The texts\*\*of the songs give some clue as to their nature even though we are without exact titles:  
Two pairs of bells my horse is wearing along the road.  
How beautiful the sky of Andalucia is. . .  
And how beautiful my partner carrying carnations.

2. Small girl, full of fire. . .  
Listen to the song of one who loves,  
one whose heart is full of adoration. His heart is full of trouble --- and love. He is a gypsy and cannot forget her because she is so spirited.

3. Pretty bird, do me a favor. . .  
Now my guacamayo (macaw bird) we must eat.  
It's a pity you haven't eaten before.  
My pretty bird painted red will you do me a favor? ---  
take this little letter to my beloved. Tell her that  
I love her and cannot forget her. With this I say goodbye.

4. Far away from my land of sunshine. . .  
A song of homesickness. Thinking about how far away he is, he is very sad.  
When he sees how sad and lonesome he is, he would like to die from pure sentiment.  
He's living far away without sweetness and love.

5. From her window she bids me sing. . .  
It is early morning. He speaks of his little bells (cascabeles) with brown ribbons. His sweetheart has asked him to serenade her with his bells. They will sound sweet.

6. Again to have your kisses. . .  
He would like to see her, to have her kisses, to have her in his heart always.

7. Bright morning star --- step slowly. . .  
A song to the stars asking that they watch over him wherever he goes. . .  
treat him with compassion. . .come down from the firmament with slow steps.

### SIDE B:

1. Who will it be who will love me?  
Who will it be who will give me her love?  
Will I be able to find her?  
Will I be able to forget her?

2. Susanna is pretty, as she runs toward me. . .

3. Green Eyes  
They left in my soul eternal love. . .a tenderness that  
only your eyes know how to create.



4. The girls in San Marcos are brown and darling. . .  
I'm going back to San Marcos to dance.  
There they have many pretty girls. He likes them especially when he sees them going to bathe because they are brown and darling.
  5. Bewitching Rose (a malaguena)  
Her eyes want to look at him but she won't let them flicker. She despises him because he's poor. He won't offer her riches. . .but offers his heart which is much more valuable. Enchanting, beautiful rose.
  6. La Llorona (legend of the weeping woman)  
There are hundreds of stories about the legendary weeping woman who haunts the night. Streets in Mexico City where she has appeared are named for her.  
Llorona take me to the river.  
Cover me with your shawl (rebozo\*)  
because the cold is hurting me.
- \* A shawl about a yard wide and 3 yards long. The fine ones can be pulled through a wedding ring.
- \*\* With grateful thanks to Anita Murray for spot translations of the general story line for each song.



COOK

LABORATORIES

Norwalk, Conn. 06854

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