Tejano Roots: 
THE WOMEN (1946 - 1970)

1. Carmen y Laura: QUE COBARDE
   (Nico Jimenez) (Ranchera) (1343 A)
   (May 1956) with Paulino
   Bernal, accordion & Conjunto Bernal
2. Carmen y Laura: ANGEL MIO
   (Frank Cantu) (Cancion) (11-B)
   (April 1946) with Narciso
   Martinez - accordion & Santiago
   Alameida - bajo sexto
3. Carmen y Laura:
   SE ME FUE MI AMOR (DAR)
   (Cancion) (4 ST) (Late 1945) with
   Isaac Figueroa-accordion, Juan
   Garcia - bajo sexto, Jesus Garcia -bass
4. Las Abajenas: PERDON MUJER
   (Gilberto Parra) (Ranchera) (177-B)
   (May 1948) with Narciso
   Martinez - accordion
5. Las Abajenas: YA NO QUIERO
   QUE ME QUIERAS (DAR)
   (Ranchera) (188-B) (1948) with
   Narciso Martinez - accordion
6. Hermanas Fraga: AMOR
   PENDIENTE (Luis M. Moreno)
   (Ranchera) (218-B) (1948) with
   Mariachi Mexico del Norte
7. Rosita Fernandez: MI FRACASO
   (Chabelita Noriega & Fidel
   Cuellar) (Bolero) (483-B)
   (July 1950) with Conjunto Ideal
8. Hermanas Segovia: TIENES
   OTROS AMORES (DAR)
   (Ranchera) (388-B) (Nov. 1949)
   with Conjunto Ideal
9. Hermanas Segovia: NO
   QUIERO ESPERAR (DAR)
   (Bolero) (504-A) (Sept. 1950)
   with Mariachi Ideal
10. Delia y Laura: CONTESTACION
    A MI CAFETAL (Porro -
    Cancion) (697-A) (Jan. 1952) with
    Orquesta De Eugenio Gutierrez
11. Rosita y Laura: LA TRAIDORA
    (Jose Alfredo Jimenez) (Ranchera)
    (708-A) (Jan. 1952) with Beto
    Villa's Orchestra
12. Rosita y Laura: ESPERANDO
    (Rafael de Paz) (Bolero) (704-A)
    (Jan. 1952) with Beto Villa's
    Orchestra

(Continued inside on Page 2)

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Tejano Roots/Raíces Tejanas
The Women (1946-1970)

Before the decade of the 1930s, women's involvement in the Mexican entertainment world centered on the vaudeville theater stage, where many achieved renown as singers, comedienne, vedettes (dancers) and segundas tipes (chorus girls). As far as recordings go, it wasn't until the late 1920s that the first female vocal duets and trios came into vogue, breaking away from this zarzuela-oriented solo and choral singing that had characterized Mexican musical theater since the turn of the century. Just how long Mexican female (and male, for that matter) duets have been popular on this side of the border is unclear. Charles Loomis of the Southwest Museum made over forty non-commercial cylinder recordings of the Villa sisters, Rosa and Luisa, accompanying themselves on guitar and mandolin in Los Angeles as early as 1904. By the mid-1920s the Herrera sisters recorded for the Sunset label in Los Angeles, and by the early 1930s the Posada sisters, Lupe and Virginia, had achieved local stardom in the Los Angeles area and the Aguilar sisters from Mexico were making highly touted appearances. A few years later Lydia Mendoza and her mother Leonor made many recordings in the dueto style for Blue Bird. However, the first female duet on this side of the border to make it really big both nationally and internationally billed as a sister duo were the Hermanas Padilla from Los Angeles. Sisters Margarita and Maria Padilla, who sang almost exclusively ranchera-type songs, pioneered a vocal style that widely influenced ranchera singing and created a demand for other female vocal duets.

By the 1940s, however, Mexican music in Texas had developed a sound and a market of its own, independent from the mainstream Mexican popular music industry. The Mexican population of Los Angeles came mainly from the central western states of Jalisco and Michoacán: birthplace of the mariachi. Direct contact was well established between the burgeoning entertainment business centers of Hollywood and Mexico City, intensively fostered in the ambiance of the race track and Prohibition era nightclubs and casinos of Tijuana. On the other hand, in the region between, roughly, San Antonio, Texas and Monterrey, Nuevo León, a distinct musical culture had evolved that was not represented by the "Tin Pan Alley" productions of Los Angeles or Mexico City. By the late 1940s this unique regional sound was best typified by the combination of

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singing accompanied by the accordion / bajo sexto conjunto, which came to be known as *música norteña*, something that was not to be found at the time in either Southern California or Central Mexico.

Major recording companies in Mexico, especially Columbia, showed some awareness of the market for this new sound from the North by recording groups like Los Alegres de Terán and Los Montañeses del Alamo in Monterrey in the early 1950s. On the U.S. side of the border, however, it was up to local entrepreneurs to cater to the musical appetites of the regional market. Major U.S. labels had stopped producing regional music with the advent of World War II. While some early Los Angeles based independent labels like Azteca did seek out performers from San Antonio such as *Lydia* and the *Mendoza Sisters*, the brunt of purveying the new *música norteña* fell upon the Mexican-American businessmen of South Texas. Foremost among these was *Armando Marroquin* whose recording efforts for Paco Bettancourt’s *Discos Ideal* made it not only the very first and most prolific of the Texas labels, but also for many years the most representative of the artists and musical culture of the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Whereas homegrown Rio Records of San Antonio and some of the Los Angeles independents recorded many of the more established performers from San Antonio, it was Marroquin who recorded hundreds and hundreds of sides by artists from Alice, Falfurrias, San Benito, Brownsville and other communities of the Lower Border region.

Because Marroquin’s first recording act was the dueto of his wife and sister-in-law, *Ideal Records* was intimately associated with the development of women’s duets from the very beginning. He was also aware of the fact that the growing Tejano middle class was not especially fond of the accordion conjuntos which were associated with the lower classes. As a result of this realization he recorded his wife and her sister, and other singers too, backed not only by conjuntos but by Beto Villa and other orchestras.

The relative success of some of the women singers in what was then essentially an all-male recording industry had its difficulties, given the traditional role that women were expected to play in conservative, patriarchal Hispanic society in the Southwest. Women were featured mainly as vocalists and as such were exploited, at least to a certain extent, for their sex appeal as much as their singing talent. It was de rigo for a woman to retire from the stage if she married and devote her full attention to raising a family (Lydia Mendoza, Carmen y Laura, Eva Garza and Chelo Silva are all notable exceptions that in one way or another prove the rule). Given the censorious moral tone of the society, one can only surmise that many gifted women never sang outside of their own homes. Few women wrote songs for commercial presentation, and almost the whole repertory of *ranchea* and *norteño* music came largely from a man’s point of view. This did not limit the depth of heart-felt emotions that these women expressed in their singing, and it is to their credit that they could turn many of these songs around. Curiously enough, it seems that the male patrons of the *cantina* particularly enjoyed hearing songs expressing a wronged man’s diatribe against female perfidy being sung by the sweet voices of women singers. Indeed, because Marroquin was primarily interested in providing product for juke boxes, the songs heard on these recordings tend to reflect the tastes of *cantina* customers and include few songs primarily more appropriate for family participation. Nevertheless, the beauty and soulfulness of these classic recordings and the popularity these women enjoyed among the people of the Southwest all attest to their genuine contribution to the development of Tejano music. We owe them tribute for enriching the music of the world with their voices.

(Zack Salem, Jim Niccolopolus and Chris Strachwitz, 1991)

**CARmEN Y LAura**

Carmen and Laura Hernandez were born five years apart (1921 and 1926) in Kingsville, Texas. Carmen, the eldest, says that her entire family used to sing, but apart from her brother Lupe Hernandez, who played jazz, none of them dreamed of performing professionally until WWII. Carmen met her husband, Armando Marroquin, while he was in college in Kingsville, and the newlyweds settled down and went into the juke box business in nearby Alice. Due to the wartime hiatus in record production in the U.S., they were obliged to buy records for their machines in Mexico. There was a great deal of red tape involved, and frustration with this gave Mr. Marroquin the idea of producing his own records. By the war’s end it had become apparent that the major record labels were not interested in resuming production of regional material. Armando Marroquin, determined to supply his juke boxes, then obtained recording equipment, including a disc cutter, and contracted with a company in California to press and distribute his recordings. He would take his portion of the profits in discs, which he would use on his own juke boxes or sell directly to other regional juke box operators. The recording itself took place in
Carmen’s kitchen, and since her sister had just returned from school in Mexico, Marroquín’s first star group was the **dueto** of his wife and her sister: **Carmen and Laura**. According to Carmen, their first hit was “**Se Me Fue Mi Amor**,” a song which laments the absence of a woman’s beloved overseas in the Service. This song not only reflects the wartime atmosphere that still prevailed, but is also unusual in presenting situations from the woman’s point of view. A few months later, when Mr. Marroquín joined up with South Texas businessman Paco Betancourt to form Ideal Records, Carmen recalls with relief that they were at last able to move the recording studio out of her kitchen: “I got everybody out of my house. No more recording in the kitchen, it was a mess.” Carmen and Laura continued to be among the most popular artists on the new label. They toured extensively in the years that followed, performing in Kansas City and Chicago as well as throughout the Southwest and California. The sisters recall that they were always accompanied by their husbands on the road and toured with dance bands such as those of popular Ideal recording artists Beto Villa or Pedro Bugarín from Arizona. Carmen and Laura never toured as part of **caravanas** like so many recording artists from Mexico would do; they would sing for dances in front of the orchestra, often performing for four hours a night. Other recordings by Carmen y Laura can be heard on Arhoolie CD 341 *Tejano Roots* and other releases in this Ideal series. Carmen and Laura made hundreds of records for Ideal with all types of supporting musicians ranging from the accordion conjuntos of neighbor Isaac Figueroa, Narciso Martínez, and Paulino Bernal to Beto Villa and his Tejano orchestra. (Jim Nicolopoulos, based on interview with Carmen and Laura by John Clark, Alice, TX, 2/17/91.)

1. **QUE COBARDE**

Qué cobarde,
me enseñaste a querer,
y luego, y luego me dejaste.
Pero, qué cobarde,
cuando más enamorada
me encontraba sin piedad me abandonaste.

**WHAT A COWARD**

What a coward,
you taught me how to love,
and then, and then you left me.
What a coward!

When I was most in love
you abandoned me without pity.

 Qué cobarde,
marchitaste la ilusión
de todos mis quereres.
Ya que no hay amor, verdad, yo maldigo con razón el ingrato corazón de los infieles.

2. ANGEL MIO
Ay ay tarde pasé por tu casa y salió tu mamá y me vido y te dice: —¿Quién es este individuo que hace días lo miro pasar?

Y si paso es que quiero verte a mi lado tan sólo un momento pa’ decirte todo lo que siento, ángel mío, yo muero por ti.

Ya no quiero que sufras, bien mío, ni que sufras ni me hagas sufrir, con las donas que borran a! tiempo ante Dios no habíamos de unir.

Ahi se acaba todo el sufrimiento, unidos para siempre los dos, si tus padres igual que los mios, nos bendicen por siempre ante Dios.

3. SE ME FUE MI AMOR
Se me fue mi amor y no sé ni adónde.

Se me fue a la guerra sin decirme: “Vuelvo.”

Se me fue mi amor, se me fue mi encanto, y no sé hasta cuándo volveré yo a verlo.

Ya que no hay amor, verdad, yo maldigo con razón

Ya quiera su sombra ser,

su suerte correrla yo,

seguir su camino y el mismo destino que tenga que tenerlo yo.

Quisiera por el volar, hacia adonde está mi bien, volar por las aves, cruzar esos mares, llegar a morir con él.

Se me fue mi amor, pero no es por siempre, porque sé que vuelve otra vez a mí.

Yo le pido a Dios, si no vuelvo a verlo, que me dé la muerte, que es mejor morir.

Las ABAJENAS (Catalina and Victoria)
These two women, probably from Northern Mexico, made only a few recordings with Narciso Martínez, who was Ideal Records’ “house musician.” Martínez backed up many singers and was also a very popular and successful accordionist on his own.

4. PERDON MUJER
Qué bonito que quisieras volver, tu cariño me hace falta mujer, ya no puedo vivir lejos de ti, ni pensar que tus caricias perdí.

Una rosa que al nacer yo corté del jardín que llevo en el corazón, poco a poco tu cariño olvidé, marchitando a tu pasión.

Perdón, mujer,

Now there is no love, no truth, so I damn, with good reason, the ungrateful heart of the unfaithful.

MY ANGEL
Yesterday I went by your house and your mother came out and saw me and said: “Who is this individual I’ve been seeing around here for days?”

If I pass by your house it’s because I want to see you at my side, if even for a moment, to tell you all I feel my angel, that I am dying for you.

I don’t want you to suffer, my love, nor that you make me suffer with the wedding gifts that erase time before God it is inevitable we be united.

Here all our suffering ends, we two are always united, if your parents as well as mine give us their eternal blessing before God.

MY LOVE HAS GONE
My love has gone, and I don’t even know where.

He left to go to war without telling me “I’ll return.”

My love has gone and with him my illusion, and I don’t know when I’ll ever see him again.

I wish I were his shadow, and have his fortune be mine, to follow his path and to share the same destiny.

I wish I could fly for him, to where ever he may be, fly like the birds across the sea, to die along with him.

My love has gone, but not for ever, for I know that one day he shall return to me.

If I don’t see him again, I ask God to grant me death, for death would be a better fate.

FORGIVE ME, WOMAN
How beautiful that you would return, I’ve missed your loving, woman I can’t live far from you now, nor recall I had lost your affection.

A rose from the garden of my heart I cut when it began to bloom. Little by little I forgot your love which withered away your passion.

Forgive me, woman,
no me niegues tu sonrisa, amor, quiero volver a tus brazos y olvidar el dolor.

Como yo, no hay quien te pueda querrer, eres buena y volverás junto a mí, mi jardín ya volverá a florecer, y ahora todo es para ti.

5. YA NO QUIERO QUE ME QUIERAS

Ya no quiero que me quieras, no seas necia, ni dirijas tus miradas hacia mí. Sólo quiero para ti el mayor desprecio, vive feliz como yo vivo sin ti.

Hazte cuenta que sombramos una milpa, y esa milpa con la helada se secó, hazte cuenta que los dos fuimos basura, hazte cuenta que lo que pasó voló.

Ya no quiero que te meta más conmigo, ni me dejes en la vida vaciar. En el tiempo que te quise me engañaste, ahora, ni modo, yo ya me voy a pasar.

Ya te dije que no me andes con tus cosas, es inútil que me vengas a rogar, aunque llores y me digas que me quieres, no tengo tiempo, yo ya me voy a pasear.

LAS HERMANAS FRAGA

Las Hermanas Fraga también grabaron para los Los Angeles-based labels and this session may in fact have been recorded in California.

don’t deny me your smile, my love. I want to return to your arms and to forget my pain.

There is no other who would love you like I, you are good and will return to me, my garden will again bloom, and this time it will be for you.

6. AMOR PENDIENTE

Yo llegué, yo estoy aquí, ya volví el que andaba ausente, ya no llores, chaparrita, en mi corazón resientes. Con la carta que mandaste, no dormí de sentimiento, las palabras que me dices, las trago en el pensamiento.

Las noches las hago días, para mi resiste el sueño, si hay alguien interesado, diles que soy tu dueño.

Mi madre me dio un consejo, que no me ande desvelando, mi madre me dio la vida, y tú me lo estás quitando.

Ya con esta me despierto, salgo pa’ tierra caliente, aquí se acaban cantando versos del amor pendiente.

ROXITA FERNANDEZ

Rosita Fernández was born in Monterrey, Nuevo León, while her father, a captain in the Mexican Army, was riding in pursuit of Pancho Villa in 1916. While still a child, the Fernández family moved to San Antonio, where Rosita’s maternal uncles earned their living as the Trio San Miguel. Young Rosita was recruited to sing with her uncles, and in 1932 won a radio singing contest which launched a long career in radio, and from 1949, in television too. Rosita made four motion pictures and many sound recordings, but she was perhaps best known in San Antonio for the 26 seasons she spent as star performer of the summer-long Fiesta Noche del Río in that city.
7. MI FRACASO
Cuando nada pedí al amor,
illegaste tú,
y el miedo de volver a sufrir
no me hacía querer.
Pudo más el dulzor de tu voz,
me venció el calor de tu ser.
Tú, también, me lograste engañar,
lastimar y sangrar mi herido corazón,
y aunque sé que hoy vuelvo a padecer,
no te culpo si ya sé que mi fracaso
es siempre querer.

LAS HERMANAS SEGOVIA
Armindo Marroquin was a very perceptive record producer who tried to reach the largest audience possible, especially with many of the women singers, by putting together back-up bands which combined the sound of the accordion conjuntos with orchestras and even mariachis. Each of these sounds appealed to a different strata of Tejano society. Conjunto Ideal, in this case including the remarkably tight interplay between trumpet, (probably Pepe Compián), and clarinet, (probably Tito Arredondo), created a sound which crossed over and attracted a wide range of listeners.

8. TIENES OTROS AMORES
Tú tienes otros amores,
ahoy te vengo a avisar,
que cuentas ya conmigo,
yo te voy a abandonar.
Pues sigue con tus amores,
yo al cabo ya no te quiero,
porque al cabo es por demás,
tu amor ya no es verdadero.

MY RUIN
When I had nothing to ask of love,
you arrived,
and the fear of suffering again,
made me hesitant.
But the sweetness of your voice
and the warmth of your soul changed my mind.
But you too were unfaithful,
and made my wounded heart bleed,
and although I know I will once again
waste away, I don't blame you, I now
know that to love will always be my ruin.

YOU HAVE OTHER LOVES
You have other loves
and I’ve come to let you know,
not to count on me anymore,
because I’m going to leave you.
Keep seeing your other loves,
because I don’t love you anyway,
because it would be a waste of time,
your love is not the genuine kind.
Te quise con todo el alma, y era mi amor para ti, sin saber que me engañabas y te burlabas de mí. Pero Dios que te bendiga, ya nuestro amor terminó, amores de varios dueños, éses no los quiero yo. Pero al fin ya me despido, ya no me busques a mí, porque al cabo es en vano, ya no te quier yo a ti.

I loved you with all my soul, and my love was all for you, without knowing you had betrayed me and had ridiculed my heart. But may God bless you now, our love has come to an end, sharing a romance with other people is no kind of love for me. That's all, at last I say goodby, don't come looking for me again, you would just be wasting your time because I no longer love you.

I DON'T WANT TO WAIT
What's the point of loving you if you are far away from me? I've cried because I miss you, because I can't feel your warmth. I want to drown these sorrows with plenty of booze. I want to have you on my mind and to kiss you, and I can't wait, you must return for the good of both of us. Come back to me, woman, alleviate the pain of my wounded soul. Come back woman, stop the pain, you are the love of my life.

DELIA y LAURA
Delia Gutiérrez and Laura Cantú (of Carmen y Laura). Delia Gutiérrez was born in Weslaco, TX, in 1931. She began singing with the orquesta of her father, Eugenio Gutiérrez, when she was eight years old. Delia grew up to be a popular singer and recorded for both Ideal and rival Falcón records. After her father's death she continued to sing with her husband's band, the Moy Pineda Orquesta.

10. CONTESTACION A MI CAFETAL
¿De qué presume, vato Calavera? Contigo la güera/Ya no quier na'.
Si tu guariche/Ya se te agüitó Y tu seguro/Se desabrochó.
Ya estuvo suave/Con los cafetales Ya son yerba jales/Que no vale na'.
Lo que tú tienes/Es un magueyal Eres bracero/Y simbra nixtamal.

ANSWER TO MY COFFEE PLANTATION
What are you so stuck up for, can't you see that this blonde wants nothing to do with a cheap guy like you? You've drunk all your beer and now your pants are falling down!
That was a good story about your coffee plantation, I'm sure it's nothing but a lot of weeds, what you've really got is a cactus farm, and you're nothing but a corn picking bracero!

ROSITA Y LAURA
Rosita Fernandez (see #7) and Laura Cantú made some beautiful records together. Their voices blended superbly and the backing of Beto Villa's orquesta is just perfect.

11. LA TRAIDORA
Ya supe todo y estoy
Que ya no me aguanto. Olía tu amante/Hablándote de tu amor. Contó tu vida con/Todo sus detalles Y yo escuchando/Muriendo de dolor.
No sé que dijo Sacando tu retrato, Habló de cosas/Que no quisiera creer. Y al fin de cuentas Se rió de tus cantos/Con una risa que

UNFAITHFUL WOMAN
Now I've found out everything, And I can't stand it anymore. I heard your lover/Talking about your love. He told of your life/In all of its details, While I listened/Dying from the pain.
I can't remember what he said As he took out your portrait, He spoke of things /I didn't want to believe. And after that he gloated over Your charms/With a smile that
Yo sentí muy cruel.
Aunque en la carcel/Me hundieran para siempre
Podría matarlo y/llevarlo hasta tus pies.
Pero él no tiene la culpa/De tu infamia,
él fue buen hombre/Y tú, mala mujer.

Felt so cruel to me.
Even though they would
Throw me in jail for eternity,
I would kill him and/Dr. him to your feet.
But it’s not his fault,/It was your infamy.
For he was a good man/And you, a bad woman.

I’m going tomorrow,
Though I don’t know where.
I know if I stay/I’ll end up killing you.
Tomorrow you will forget my name
And I as well/Shall have to forget yours.

Mahana mismo que voy,/No sé pa’ donde,
Sé que me quedo/Y te tengo que matar.
Mahana mismo te olvidas/De mi nombre,
Que yo del tuyo/También me he de olvidar.

12. ESPERANDO
Se han cansado mis brazos
De estarte esperando.
Se han secado mis labios
Por tu nombre gritar.
He buscado por todos los caminos
Del mundo
Y están secos mis ojos
De llorar y llorar.

Y te sigo esperando
Con eterna esperanza
De que sí acaso mis ruegos
Llegue tu alma a escuchar.
Mientras tanto mis brazos
Y mis labios/Se cansan
Y mis ojos se secan
De llorar y llorar.

WAITING
My arms have gotten tired
Of waiting for you.
And my mouth has dried out
From shouting your name.
I’ve searched for you to the ends
Of the earth
And my eyes have dried out
From crying and crying.

And I still wait you
With the eternal hope,
That someday my prayers
Will reach your soul.
Meanwhile my arms
And my lips are tired
And my eyes are dry
From crying and crying.
LAS HERMANAS CANTU

The Cantù sisters were born in Falfurrias, Texas. Nori (b.1935) and Ninfa (b.1937) began touring with the Beto Villa orchestra and recording for Ideal as the prize for winning a singing contest in Alice, Texas. They were joined by their younger sister Nellie (b.1943) in 1956. The Cantù sisters also recorded for many of the other regional labels that sprang up in imitation of Discos Ideal, and although Ninfa got married and retired in 1961, Nori and Nellie continued recording and performing until 1978. They are backed here by a very young Paulino Bernal on accordion, soon to be a star of conjunto music.

13. LA QUE SEA

Voy por el mundo sin rumbo fijo
No siento pena ni siento amor
Soy el fantasma de mi pasado,
Soy de las almas que olvida Dios.

Tuve un cariño que fue mi vida
Fue mi locura, mi adoración.
Pero más grande fue mi tormento
Cuando cruelmente me abandonó.

Hoy la que venga, muy bien venida,
Si quiere irse, nomás se va.
Que allí vendrán otras, otras y otras
Que hoy la que sea, para mi es igual.

Yo no soy de éses que al verso solo
Quieren matarse o vengar su amor.
Por el contrario yo la bendigo
Por el amor que una vez me dio.

Si un día con otro yo la encontrara
Y me llorara pidiendo amor
La perdonaba, que al fin sería
Lo que en mi vida las otras son.

WHOEVER COMES ALONG

I wander the world without direction
Without feeling shame and without feeling love.
I'm only the ghost of my past,
One of those souls that God has forgotten.

I had a love that was my life
My passion and my madness.
But even greater than this love,
Was the torment I felt when she abandoned me.

Today, any woman who comes along is welcome,
If she doesn't want to stay, she can go.
For there will be more, many, many more,
And to me they are all the same.

I'm not one of those people
That when abandoned would kill himself or take revenge.
On the contrary, I would bless her
For the love she once gave me.

If I found her one day with another
And she cried, asking for my love,
I would forgive her, because in the end
She would be to me just like the rest.

LAS HERMANAS GUERRERO

María Luisa, (who sings #16 solo), and Felipa Guerrero were from South Texas and are backed here by Jimmy Morgan's Conjunto. Morgan also made a number of fine records on his own about this time (1960).

14. RAMA SECA

Tú solita te fuiste alejando
Cuando viste que supe lo que eres
Y a todos los fuistes contando
Que me dejaras porque no me quieras.

Eres guía que se enreda en las piedras
Que se está a ver cuántas alcanzas
Pero a mí no pudiste enredarme
Porque no te tuve confianza.

Rama seca que cuelga del árbol
Nunca vuelve a tener hojas verdes
Por capricho te vas de mi lado
Pero vas a extrañar lo que pierdes.

Tú dirás que el amor es juguete
Y que cae como la lluvia del cielo
Tus amores que vuelen muy altos
He de verlos rodar por el suelo.

Rama seca, etc.

15. LA CASADA

Yo soy la mujer casada
Con las penas que he pasado
Mi marido de bracero
No me manda ni un centavo.

Tengo tres años de estar sola
Ay, nomás sufriendo errores:
El gastando puro dólar
Y yo sintiendo los dolores.

THE MARRIED WOMAN

I am the married woman
With all the shame I suffer.
My husband has gone to work as a bracero
And doesn't send me a penny.

I've been alone for three years
Suffering from my mistakes:
He's been spending nothing but dollars,
And I've been feeling nothing but pain.
Las que no se hayan casado
No deben darte la pena
Vale
Que cien platos en la ajena.

Cuando yo andaba de novia
M e ofrecian leche y frijoles
Ahora son gorditas con chile
Pa ' tomar jarros de atole.

La mujer engaña al hombre
If she is half starved
But a man , if it please s
Chases after whoever he wants.

Todas dicen ser muy gallos
Todos dicen ser más machos
Pero son desobligados
Apart from being drunkards.

No quiero morirme de hambre
Siendo la mujer más buena
Vale más ser de las malas
And always have plenty to eat.

16. CARTA DE LUTO

Alié te mando esta carta de luto
Pa' decirte lo mucho que sufro
Porque es tanto el amor que te tengo
Que ya siento mi corazón muerto.

Esta carta con lápiz va escrita
Y no creas que es por falta de pinta
Sólo quiero que al verla comprendas
Que se encuentra mi vida marchita.

Coro: Esta carta de luto te escribo
Porque triste y negro es mi destino

LETTHER OF MOURNING

I'm sending you this letter of mourning
To tell you how much I suffer
Because I love you so much
That I feel my heart has died.

I'm writing this letter in pencil
But don't think it's because I'm out of ink
I just want to show you
How much my life has faded away.

Chorus: I'm writing you this letter of mourning
Because my destiny is sad and dark,
Si ven cerca de Reynosa o de Matamoros
A un ranchero de Nuevo León
No le hable ni diga nada, que va de paso
A olvidar un mal amor.

Si la inmigración me pesca al cruzar el Bravo
Les diré: "Mister, por favor,
Me llene como soldado ante el tío de piocha
Y que me mande al Japón."

Adiós Angelita Rivas de la Rivera
Y mi barrio "Nacional"
Adiós Cerro de la Silla, y la Sierra Madre
No los volveré a mirar.

GOODBYE ANGELITA RIVAS
So long Angelita Rivas de la Rivera
I'm going far away from here.
If I can cross the river I'll go to Texas
And from there on to Tennessee.

I'm not going as a bracero but as a wetback,
All I want is to just get away from here.
I don't want my friends to know that
I went to your wedding, you would laugh at me.

I know your little husband has plenty of bucks,
And that he bought your heart.
My cow, my six goats and my sheep
Are worthless things to you.

In the town of China I stopped by "La Ceja"
And had the best fritada in Nuevo León.
The owner bought me a beer, and
Toasting my health, said "So long,"

19. LE FALTA UN CLAVO A MI CRUZ
Le falta un clavo a mi cruz
Pa' morir crucificado.
Mis pobres ojos sin luz
No miran ya mi pasado.

Me bebí mi propia vida
En una copa mortal.
Y por una sola herida
Se presentó lo fatal.

Coro:
Aqui estoy crucificado
Con tanta desilusión
Sólo me hace falta un clavo
En mitad del corazón.

Clávelo tú por favor
Para que acabe mi pena.
Quiero morirme de amor
Porque muerte es muy buena.

LAS RANCHERITAS
These two women from the lower Rio Grande Valley were accompanied by the Banda brothers, who in the 1960’s became one of the most popular conjunto's along the border.

18. ADIOS ANGELITA RIVAS
Adiós Angelita Rivas de la Rivera
Ya me voy muy lejos de aquí.
Si puedo pasar el río, me voy a Texas
Y de allá hasta Tennessee.

Ahora no soy bracero, soy de mojado,
Lo que quiero es irme de aquí
Que no digan mis amigos que fui a tu boda
A que te burles de mí.

Yo sé que tiene arta lana tu ricachuelo,
Yo sé que te compró el corazón.
Mi vaca, mis seis chivitas y mi borrego
No tienen ningún valor.

En China paré en "la Ceja" y comí fritada
La mejor de Nuevo León
Su dueño me dio cerveza para botana
Y brindando dice, "Adiós".

GOODBYE ANGELITA RIVAS
So long Angelita Rivas de la Rivera
I'm going far away from here.
If I can cross the river I'll go to Texas
And from there on to Tennessee.

I'm not going as a bracero but as a wetback,
All I want is to just get away from here.
I don't want my friends to know that
I went to your wedding, you would laugh at me.

I know your little husband has plenty of bucks,
And that he bought your heart.
My cow, my six goats and my sheep
Are worthless things to you.

In the town of China I stopped by "La Ceja"
And had the best fritada in Nuevo León.
The owner bought me a beer, and
Toasting my health, said "So long,"
LYDIA MENDOZA

Lydia Mendoza was born in Houston, Texas in 1916. Her family moved frequently, but Lydia was able to learn to sing and play stringed instruments from both her grandmother and her mother, Leonor, in Monterrey, N.L. The Mendoza family moved definitively back to Texas in 1927, and Lydia, as part of the family group Cuarteto Carta Blanca, made her first recordings for the OKeh company in San Antonio in the spring of the following year. The family spent the years between 1928-35 playing for tips in the streets, markets and parks of Texas and the Midwest. From 1932-35 the family performed in the Plaza del Zacate (Haymarket Square) in San Antonio, where Lydia came to the attention of Manuel J. Cortez, a pioneer of Mexican-American radio broadcasting. Lydia’s local success as a live radio performer set the stage for her recordings for the Blue Bird company in 1934, one of which, (“Mal Hombre”), became an overnight success of unprecedented proportions. This led to an intensive career of touring and recording that was only interrupted by WW II. After the war Lydia resumed her career, and recorded for all of the important post-war Mexican-American labels, including Discos Ideal. Although Lydia dominates an incredibly broad repertoire of songs, she has composed relatively few herself. One of her personal favorites, however, is “Amor Bonito,” which she wrote thinking of her husband while out on tour. Lydia Mendoza was undoubtedly the first real female star of Mexican-American music and her recordings, both solo and with the family group, undoubtedly inspired many of the other female artists that are heard in this collection. Lydia continued performing and recording until 1988, when a stroke slowed her career.

20. AUNQUE ME ODIES
Quiro mirarme en esos ojos
Que me desprecian
Quiro besar tus labios rojos
Que me maldicen
Quiro sentir el palpitar
Cuando suspiras
Y asi decirte que aunque me odies
Seré tu amor.

EVEN IF YOU HATE ME
I want to see myself in your eyes
That despise me so much,
I want to kiss those lips of yours
That speak evil of me,
I want to hear your heartbeat
When you sigh
And to tell you that although you hate me
I will always be your love.

Entre tus ojos miro el desprecio
Que tuto me guardas
Entre tus labios hallo el veneno
Que me has de dar
Déjame verme en esos ojos
Aunque me hieran.
Déjame verte, aunque me muera
Después de amar.

HERMANAS MENDOZA

María (1922-1990) and Juanita (1927) Mendoza were both born in Monterrey, N.L. María, like her sister Lydia, an accomplished string musician as well as a singer, was already part of the Mendoza family group that began singing in the Plaza del Zacate in 1932. Little sister Juanita learned singing, dancing and comic routines in the carpas (tent shows) where her mother Leonor and older sisters would appear during these years. After sister Lydia’s success as a recording artist, both María and Juanita would hone their talents as part of the family variedad that toured until 1941. During the war years, while Lydia temporarily retired to concentrate on raising her children, Juanita and María achieved local success singing as the dueto Hermanas Mendoza. After the war, Juanita and María resumed touring along with sister Lydia and the family variedad. Recordings on the Azteca label from Los Ángeles, however, revealed that the dueto of the Hermanas Mendoza had a tremendous appeal all its own. They toured and recorded extensively on their own until shortly after their mother’s death in 1952. As so often seems to have happened, it was the marriage of one of the sisters that brought this seminal dueto to a premature end while still in its prime.

21. PUENTES QUEMADOS
Voy a quemar los puentes cuando cruce
Así no hay regreso por segunda vez a ti.
Las llamadas que produzcan mis desprecios
Te harán que sufras como tú me hiciste a mí.

Coro:
Puentes quemados, han cerrado mi regreso.
Aso lo quise este amor que yo te di.
No cruzarán ni siquiera tus desprecios,
Porque es preciso que me olvide yo de ti.

I see the disdain in your eyes
That you reserve for me.
In your lips I find the poison
That you have to give me.
Let me look into your eyes,
Although you wound me,
Let me look at you, although I die
After loving you.

BURNED BRIDGES
I’m going to burn the bridges once I cross
So that I won’t be able to return to you.
The cries that my disdain will draw from you
Will make you suffer as you have made me.

Chorus:
Burned bridges have closed the way back,
As the love I gave you wanted it so.
Nothing shall cross, not even your reproaches
Because it is important that I forget you.
Voy a quemar los puente s cuando cruce
Así no hay regreso al desprecio de tu amor.
Y seguiré buscando entre la nada
Amor que sepa comprenderme mi dolor.

22. AMOR BONIT O
El mundo estará muy lleno
De amores y de querencias
Pero para me hay uno solo
Que da luz a mi existencia.
Mi amor es retebonito,
Brillante como un lucero
En las tristezas de mi alma
Me alegra con su recuerdo.
Doy gracias a mi Diosito,
Por lo bueno que es conmigo
Que siempre oye mis plegarias
A todo lo que le pido.
Amor bonito, bonito,
Cariño, mi cariñito.
Amor bonito, bonito,
Cariño, mi cariñito.
Te quiero porque te quiero,
Porque eres mi amor bonito.
Tu amor es retebonito
Radiante como una estrella
Que pensado en tu cariño
Se acaban todas mis penas.
Doy gracias a mi Diosito
Por lo bueno que es conmigo.
Que siempre oye mis plegarias
A todo lo que le pido.
I'm going to burn the bridges once I cross
That way I can't return to your
deceitful heart love
I'll continue to search hopelessly
For the one who will understand my pain.

BEAUTIFUL LOVE
The world could be full
Of love and romances
But for me there is only one
That has lighted my existence.
My love is extra beautiful
Bright as a shining star
In the sadness of my soul
I brighten when it comes to mind.
I give thanks to my dear God
For being so good to me
For always hearing my prayers
And everything that I ask.
My beautiful little love,
My darling, my little darling.
Beautiful beautiful love of mine,
My darling, my dear one.
I love you because I love you,
Because you are my beautiful love.
Your love is extra beautiful
Radiant like a shining star
Thinking of your tenderness
Puts an end to all my sorrows.
I give thanks to my dear God
For being so good to me.
For always hearing my prayers,
And everything that I ask.

Chelo Silva, above
Lydia Mendoza, left:

"Las Grandes de Tejas"
These pioneer women recording artists cover the wide spectrum of Mexican-American music and song. Until the 1940s *Lydia Mendoza* was the only female star of Tejano music whose repertoire and voice appealed to every strata of Spanish speaking society throughout the Americas. By 1946, when *Ideal Records*, under the able direction of Armando Marroquin, began recording Tejano music in South Texas, *Carmen & Laura*, accompanied by *conjunto* and *orquestra* giants like *Conjunto Bernal*, *Narciso Martinez* and *Beto Villa*, had become the label’s first women stars. Here are the pure country-style rancheras of the *Guerrero Sisters* along with the sophisticated boleros of *Chelo Silva* and *Rosita Fernandez*. A 24 page booklet with detailed information, photographs, and song lyrics is enclosed.