



The Departed

(A Poem for the Cadavers)

By Georgia Christakis

Don't look for me in there,
For I've been a long time gone.
The doors are locked, the shutters sealed
And there's no one at home.

This is an empty house.
See the shattered window pane;
It's a shell of what it used to be,
An empty picture frame.

You can come in seeking shelter,
But I am not inside.
You will find the hallways empty,
And the cupboards bare and dry.

You see now but a skeleton
Of where life once was lived.
The hearth and parlor fireplace
Have no more warmth to give.

But it is not all lifeless!
Weeds will soon burst through the floor,
And what once was bear and empty
Shall become a home once more.

So come in, explore each corner,
And inspect each subtle crack.
Through your thoughtful explorations,
You may one day bring life back.

“¡En la sombra!”

By Ann Sheddan

As someone who speaks “un poco español,” traveling to a country where very little where very little English is spoken was quite intimidating at first. However, even with the language barriers, I found I was able to communicate “mucho con los niños de Nicaragua.” For some reason, the children understood what I was saying, and spoke slowly enough so that I could understand them. My theory: the kids were used to hearing their baby siblings learning to speak and I probably sounded similar... más o menos.

At one of our clinics, I was working “crowd control” outdoors, and I was trying to have the kids move into the shade to play a game. It was stifling hot. I'm practically albino, and I didn't know how much more SPF 50 my skin could absorb on top of all of the sweat. I was trying my best. I didn't know the actual word for “shade,” so I described it as best I could: “Donde el sol no es. Aquí.” Blank stares. The kids looked up, saw the sun, looked at each other and smiled like I was losing it. I kept going, trying to motion and act out “shade.” Really fun, try it. Finally a little girl who appeared to be about 9-years-old bellowed:

“¡EN LA SOMBRA!”

All of the kids ran into the shade and laughed. “¡Muchas gracias!” The little girl just gave a knowing smile and started playing the game with us. It was amazing to witness and participate in communication without sharing a language. I learned that even though my Spanish was full of errors, the children and the adults appreciated the fact that I was trying my best to speak the language.



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