



1984

## October 30, 1983 Rio de Janeiro

Ruth Hill

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/calliope>

 Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

### Recommended Citation

Hill, Ruth (1984) "October 30, 1983 Rio de Janeiro," *Calliope*: Vol. 1984 : Iss. 1 , Article 16.  
Available at: <http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/calliope/vol1984/iss1/16>

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by the English at ScholarWorks at WMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Calliope by an authorized editor of ScholarWorks at WMU. For more information, please contact [maira.bundza@wmich.edu](mailto:maira.bundza@wmich.edu).



October 30, 1983  
Rio de Janeiro

From my bedroom window I look at the taxis  
One parked across the street is for sale  
Its license plate reads RJ1220  
To the left there's a building under construction  
Near the sky is a wooden platform used by workmen  
to build the next storey  
I wonder how many seconds there are between it and the street below

The last time I came here, I saw a family living under a viaduct  
I rode a bus with six bags of belongings (they were of white plastic,  
with a hanger jabbing a hole through one), and five people going somewhere  
We passed the big statue of Christ which overlooks the entire city

I go to an open fruit market and watch a legless man who wears sandals  
strapped to his trunk  
He inches through the market, selling onions  
Another man leans into my face and breathes a dirty breath smell  
He asks for money which I don't have for him  
Those types of men have questions for you always

I went to the beach this morning and I'm burned now  
The dollar climbs daily and I'm still wondering how long  
it would take to hit the cement below,  
how long for this city to fall inconspicuously into the ocean  
This tropical paradise with Winter pains that have no cures.

Ruth Hill