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We'll Grow!

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*(Despite autumn... Amaury Pérez Vidal)*

You want to think, you need to believe, and you think it's just a bad fall. In Cuba, a tropical paradise, autumns are hardly appreciated. It's that season of the year when summer pales in cold countries, the leaves of trees fall, it rains frequently, and everything comes together: mud, dirt, and nostalgia. You look at the street behind window panes, and you want to go back to bed, and sleep like bears until next summer.

But there's also beauty in the fall, when the last ray of sun appears joyfully and timidly. So you walk slowly over the carpet of yellow leaves. You wait, because you know that the first snowfall is about to fall, and, just like that sweeper of sorrows, it's going to wash away all the dirt and leave the angel...

This has been – and still is – an autumn that is too long for Cubans. Fidel's departure, that sun that we came to think of as everlasting. And the changes, always the changes, one thinks, wants to believe, that for the better, necessary, dialectical, perhaps essential... And with them the risk (Maximum!) of overstretching or fall short; the risk of stumbling in the attempt. Fall down. And get back up, over and over again. Try again. There's no other solution. We have to keep going!

Many times you slip, but you hold on, because you learned to walk again the most slippery paths with your combat boots. But sometimes they push you. How many efforts to throw Cuba into the abyss of confusion. How cruelly willing for that to rip out the heart with which you live

and fight. How much overt, rude hatred before the cameras, microphones and keyboards, how much false love disguised as imperial paternalism, or futile protectiveness from cold Europe. Old and new promoters of the embrace of death.

And you still wanting to grow the white rose, but willing to die facing the sun, like the Apostle, with revolver in hand and standing on the stirrup of your winged steed, angel in frenzy.

You get tired, sometimes you get a little tired. Or you get sick a few idiots here. Those who were once a flash and today have grown dark inside. Wow, they were in your trenches and you shared the last drop of water with them. But today they prefer to drink the wine of ingratitude alone. Those did, got tired. But they don't leave, they stay. They seemed willing to step on your decision to endure with their new shoes of a dubious brand. They won't be able to. You won't allow them. Because you reaffirm yourself every day as a Cuban revolutionary, a soldier in the ranks of Fidel, Raúl, and brother Miguel.

Then you raise above it again, you get up, you leave the window of nostalgia and you see the blue sky of this morning. You look beside you, read the many, thousands of messages, friends, and you see that you are not alone. That your army of revolutionaries is not defeated, that many young people join it, because they believe in the ideas (ideas that sometimes, without knowing it, you transmitted to them in a simple chat one night of blackout, or during a concert in the house of Martí on January 28<sup>th</sup> at 12:01 a.m.), and they decide to turn them into facts, because they need their own feats, because they still want to believe in the stream in the mountains and in the warm drop of water shared in the trench of his-our Revolution.

Let's take a walk! Let the songs of the good trova move us. Let the example of the homeland's martyrs move us, those that we will not let ourselves be carried away. May the young peasants and agronomists of the invincible sierra and the unalterable steps move us, from the plains of Camagüey and the University of Oriente, may the Moncadistas of Mayabeque and the Guevarian guerrillas of Santa Clara move us, the boys and girls of CUJAE and ISA... Those from San Antonio to Maisí.

May the grandchildren of Fidel and the direct descendants of Martí's soul move us, all those who carry the proud passport of Cuban patriots in red, black, white and blue.

Despite the fall: we will grow!!!

**Translated by Amilkal Labañino / CubaSí Translation Staff**