

*Only Paradox  
Grows in Puerto Rico*

by Julio Montalvo Valentin

---

Phantosimia dangles its scent above cana de azucar,  
always sour before harvest.  
To grow sugar cane,  
you must dissect sets of yourself because  
society values growth over being whole these days.  
Does not matter where you are planted,  
you will still stretch and yearn for Neruda's sun.  
But there is money to be made in harvesting the sweetest parts of you.  
To be burned and burned and burned again.  
You can only die when they are done.  
You can only be free when they are done.  
They are done now and have been after  
they dug out all the gold and sugar from your soil.  
You still posture yourself in what remains  
and sift through the days  
for worth.