

Archaeological Notes**I**

I've come to dig life out of its place, Aztec,
Toltec, Mayan. What am I doing on this island?
I'm digging for the timid sacrifice of those
who dug the hearts of virgins out with a stick.
The heart of a *campesino* is said to contain gold,
the rich, coal. But my concerns are more of amulets &
plants. Since I'm the guest here, I feel the need to
tell what I can. They summon me to the stone table
where a banquet is about to begin. I feel very near
these people, grubbing through the buildings & weeds,
turning up worms. I feel the bond of brotherhood.
I dig them out. See nothing but grey on grey as
they slip into crevices again. The rock demons have
swallowed them up. They wonder what I'm looking for,
why I've come to uproot their noises from rat holes.
I was born here I think. My brother stares up to
see through the crannies. It is the biggest obstacle,
the hardest to see. The sign of a tool. Berries
must have been their food. Their clothes were not
skins. At the bottom is the stone table full of
bones & miracles.

— *Larry Towell*