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God Bless the Azorean Immigrants

God bless the Azorean immigrants
who leave behind their black lava shores;
their courage must match their vision
when they arrive at Ellis Island's doors.

It's the same old desperate story:
borrow the passage money,
go in debt to finally be free—
milk those cows; stack that hay;
and put more pride into the family tree.

My grandmother, Maria Cordeiro
wasn't afraid to speak at first
when she told her Mama of her American dream;
but when a hard wooden shoe came
flying across the room directly at her
it was all she could do to jump and scream.

She kept a long secret silence with her mother,
and she convinced her father to buy her ticket
on that great boat across the Atlantic ocean.
He understood the dream in her heart
was much more than a mere childhood notion.

Oh we put our nose to the grindstone
so our children would share the gifts of our truths;
and now our offspring are pillars of a community
with strong and lasting Portuguese roots.

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