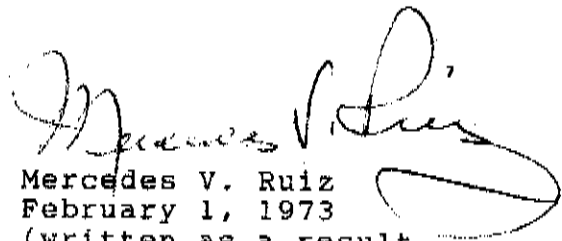


Because I've been granted the gift of life
I want to live each moment to the fullest,
I want to submerge my being much more than before,
In the wonders of nature and love,
I want to reach and feel,
because feeling in itself is a way of loving.
I want to tremble at the wildness of the storm
and bathe myself with rain.
I want to touch the clouds
and hold the blue within one word.
I want to cry before the ocean waves
because they rush to me and kiss me
and then they leave.
I want the wonder of the starry night above,
the moon, a sigh, and each of all my silences.



Mercedes V. Ruiz
February 1, 1973
(written as a result
of my survival of the
crash of Eastern Air
Lines Flight 401 on
December 29, 1972.)