

SUI GENERIS  
{OF ITS OWN KIND}

# NOVA

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## SUI GENERIS

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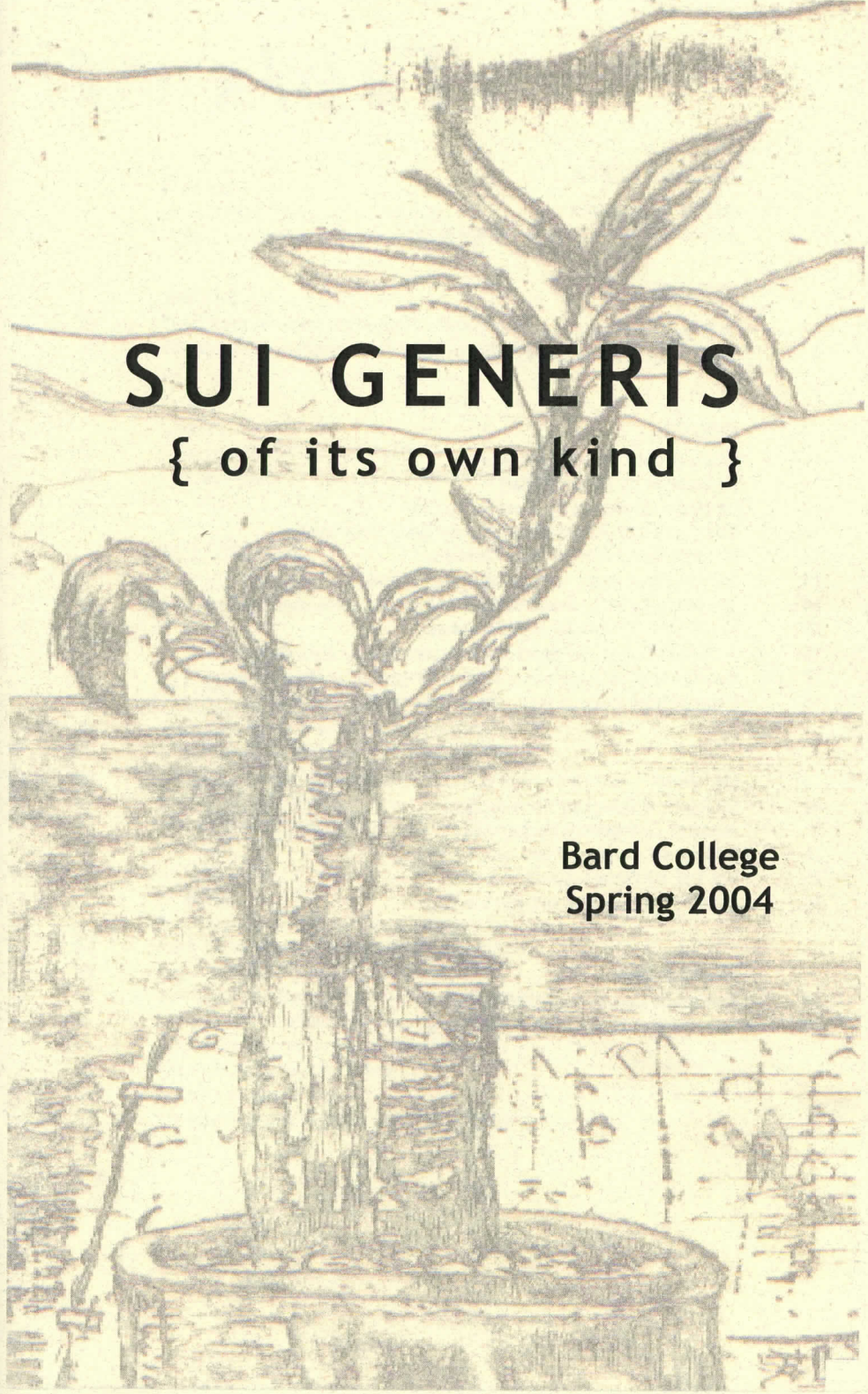
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Bard College  
Spring 2004

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# Ancient Greek

## Mêdeia by Euripides

Korinthiai gunaikes, exêlthon domôn mê moi ti mempsêsth': oida gar pollous brotôn semnous gegôtas, tous men ommatôn apo, tous d' en thuraiois: hoi d' aph' hêsouchou podos duskleian ektêsanto kai rhaithumian. dikê gar ouk enest' en ophthalmois brotôn, hostis prin andros splanchnon ekmathein saphôs stugei dedorkôs, ouden êdikêmenos. chrê de xenon men karta proschôrein polei: oud' aston êines' hostis authadês gegôs pikros politais estin amathias hupo. emoi d' aelpton pragma prospeson tode psuchên diephthark': oichomai de kai biou charin metheisa katthanein chrêizô, philai. en hôi gar ên moi panta, gignôskô kalôs, kakistos andrôn ekbebêch' houmos posis. pantôn d' hos' est' empsucha kai gnômên echei gunaikas esmen athliôtaton phuton: has prôta men dei chrêmatôn hyperbolêi posin priasthai, despotên te sômatos [labein: kakou gar tout' et' algion kakon].

kan tôid' agôn megistos, ê kakon labein ê chrêston: ou gar eukleis apallagai gunaixin oud' hoion t' anênasthai posin. es kaina d' êthê kai nomous aphigmenên dei mantin einai, mê mathousan oikothen, hopôs arista chrêsetai xuneunetêi. kan men tad' hêmin ekponoumenaisin eu posis xunoikêi mê biai pherôn zugon, zêlôtos aiôn: ei de mê, thanein chreôn. anêr d', hotan tois endon achthêtai xunôn, exô molôn epause kardian asês [ê pros philon tin' ê pros hêlika trapeis]: hêmin d' anankê pros mian psuchên blepein. legousi d' hêmas hôs akindunon bion zômen kat' oikous, hoi de marnantai dori, kakôs phronountes: hôs tris an par' aspida stênai theloim' an mallon ê tekein hapax.

all' ou gar hautos pros se kam' hêkei logos: soi men polis th' hêd' esti kai patros domoibiou t' onêsis kai philôn sunousia, egô d' erêmos apolis ous' hubrizomai pros andros, ek gês barbarou lelêismenê, ou mêter', ouk adelphon, ouchi sungenê methormisasthai tês d' echousa  
s u m p h o r a s .  
*tosouton oun sou tunchanein boulêsomai*\*, ên moi poros tis mêchanê t' exeurethêi posin dikên tônd' antiteisasthai kakôn [ton donta t' autôi thugater' hê t' egêmato], sigan. gunê gar talla men phobou plea kakê t' es alkên kai sidêron eisoran: hotan d' es eunên êdikêmenê kurêi, ouk estin allê phrên miaiphonôtera.

## **Medea**

**Medea's Speech to the Corinthian Women, lines 214-266**

*by Euripides*

*free translation by Amelia Day*

Corinthian women! I have come out of the house lest you find some fault with me, for I know that many mortals can seem haughty to you - both publicly and in private; though these same people may also gain such reputation for being quiet and keeping their temper in all appearances. For when justice is not present in the eyes of mortals, they hate whomever they see, even before they see him clearly. Thus as a foreigner it is necessary to enter your city ... for there is nothing left to hope for from anyone, and my very soul has been destroyed.

All grace has left me, and, bereft, I feel it is better to die, my friends. All that I knew to be beautiful is now defiled by my hateful husband. For of all those having life and awareness, we women are the most unfortunate. First it is necessary to pay money to obtain a husband, to take a master of our bodies; and still we may suffer another evil worse than this one. For on this does our happiness depend, whether we take a good or a bad husband, for we cannot divorce and keep our reputations, and we cannot reject a potential husband. A woman arriving to the new customs of marriage must be a seeress, if she has not learned such things at home, as to how she will best treat her bed-mate. And if things go well, then it seems her husband lives agreeably with her - he does not bear the yoke of marriage harshly, and her life is enviable - but if they do not, then it is better to die.

A man, joined in marriage who suffers any sadness may come outside and cure his heart of misery, turning either to friends or peers; but we can look only to one person for our suffering. Yet our husbands say that we, safe little wives, live a privileged life at home while they fight their wars with cold spears. How badly do they lie! For I would raise the shield three times before I'd bear one child. But the story is not the same for you and me, Corinthian women - you have a city and the house of your father - a happy life with friends and I am alone, without a city, wronged by my husband, seized as I was from my own land [the land of barbarians, they call it] - and I have no mother or brother or kinsmen to anchor with.

And so I ask this favor from you: if I find a way to repay my husband for his wrongs against me [and destroy his new-found bride and her father in the process], keep quiet about it. For in all else is a woman afraid, when she looks upon bronze or steel [cold-hearted weapons each, I am sure] - but when she has been wronged in love or marriage, there is no heart more tainted than hers...

# Chinese

## 《匆匆》

燕子去了，有再來的時候；楊柳枯了，有再青的時候；桃花謝了，有再開的時候。但是，聰明的，你告訴我，我們的日子為什麼一去不復返呢？——是有人偷了他們罷：那是誰？又藏在何處呢？是他們自己逃走了：現在又到了哪裡呢？

我不知道他們給了我多少日子；但我的手確乎是漸漸空虛了。在默默裡算著，八千多日子已經從我手中溜去；像針尖上一滴水滴在大海裡，我的日子滴在時間的流裡，沒有聲音也沒有影子。我不禁頭涔涔而淚潸潸了。

去的盡管去了，來的盡管來著，去來的中間，又怎樣的匆匆呢？早上我起來的時候，小屋裡射進兩三方斜斜的太陽。太陽他有腳啊，輕輕悄悄地挪移了；我也茫茫然跟著旋轉。於是——洗手的時候，日子從水盆裡過去；喫飯的時候，日子從飯碗裡過去；默默時，便從凝然的雙眼前過去。我覺察他去的匆匆了，伸出手遮挽時，他又從遮挽著的手邊過去，天黑時，我躺在床上，他便伶伶俐俐地從我身邊跨過，從我腳邊飛去了。等我睜開眼和太陽再見，這算又溜走了一日。我掩著面嘆息。但是新來的日子的影兒又開始在嘆息裡閃過了。

在逃去如飛的日子裡，在千門萬戶的世界裡的我能做些什麼呢？隻有徘徊罷了，隻有匆匆罷了；在八千多日的匆匆裡，除徘徊外，又剩些什麼呢？過去的日子如輕煙被微風吹散了，如薄霧，被初陽蒸融了；我留著些什麼痕跡呢？我曾留著像遊絲樣的痕跡呢？我赤裸裸來到這世界，轉眼間也將赤裸裸地回去罷？但不能平的，為什麼偏要白白走這一遭啊？

你聰明的，告訴我，我們的日子為什麼一去不復返呢？

朱自清

1922年3月28日

## Rush

"Cong Cong" (1922) by Zhu Zi-qing  
translated by Sau Pan (Amy) Chau

Swallows leave, there is a time when they will return; willows fade, there is also a time when they turn green; peach blossoms wither, there is a time when they blossom again. Even so, the wiser one, you tell me, why our days have no return?—If someone had stolen them: Who could it be? Where could they hide? Had they escaped on their own? If so, where could they be at this moment?

I do not know how much time they have given me; but my hands indeed, are gradually empty. I reckon in silence, more than eight thousand days have slipped from my hands; like how a drop of water from a needlepoint dissolves in the ocean; my days have dripped in the stream of time without sound and shadow. I cannot help but shake my head and shed tears.

Those that have gone, let them go; they will come when they need to; what about the rush between leaving and coming? When I arise in the morning, two or three rays of sunlight shoot through my hut, resulting in oblique shapes. The Sun has feet itself, it shifts gently, stealthily; and I rotate with it blindly. Therefore—time elapses from the water basin when one washes one's hands; time glides from the rice bowls when one eats; it passes away in front of one's eyes during contemplation. I become aware that it runs in a rush. When I stretch my hand to block it, to hold it back, it escapes yet again from my hands. At dark, I lie on my bed, it neatly strides over my body, and flies away from my feet. The day flees when I open my eyes and catch sight of the Sun, and I consider. I bury my face in my hands and sigh. However, the shadow of an incoming day starts to thrill through my sigh.

Among the days that have escaped fleetingly, what can I achieve in the world of innumerable homes? I only end up wandering and simply cease in a rush. In more than eight thousand rushing days, excluding the wanderings, what is left over? Past days like light smoke are dispersed by the breeze, are vaporized and melted by the morning sun like mist. What kind of mark have I left? Have I ever left any gossamer trace? I came to this world naked. Will I go back shortly, completely naked? But it is unfair, why have I come here in vain?

You, o wiser one, tell me, why have our days gone forever?

# French

## Palais de Justice

*by Peter Sourian*

Pour chaque guillotine il y aura de belles fleurs.  
La guillotine inerte ignore sa maison.  
Les fleurs meurent et renaissent devant le palais.  
Dans la cour, la machine attend la main vivante.

## La Surprise

*by Peter Sourian*

La mort ne surprend point le sage.  
La Fontaine

Vert et joyeux ! Mais au même moment, défait.  
La sagesse repart devant la peur naissant.  
Devant la tombe là-bas mon beau chien se tait.  
Mes doigts sont déjà de désespoir tout sanglants.

Le chien surpris trimballe un aspect toujours blanc.  
Il ne comprend pas. C'est pourquoi il est soumis.  
Ne me soumettant pas, je suis soumis pourtant.  
Vert et joyeux ! Et bien pris sur le fait aussi.

## Le jardin de pierres

by Alain Benitolila

Un jour demain plus tard il sera toujours l'heure  
J'irai chez lui là-bas dans le jardin des morts  
La barque des vivants est noyée de douleur  
Quand ceux qui sont partis la laissent dans le port

Lorsque mes souvenirs surgiront comme l'eau  
Du fond de son silence une voix renaîtra  
Puis je verrai bouger ce lancinant tableau  
Et tout ce qui n'est plus me réapparaîtra

L'histoire de sa vie qui a fait mon enfance  
Coulera doucement dessus sa tombe noire  
Et si de son passé je n'ai que l'ignorance  
Le nom qu'il m'a donné est toute sa mémoire

Je fermerai les yeux ébloui de lumière  
Et quand j'aurai compris des choses le mystère  
Caché dans le secret du plus profond des pierres  
Je quitterai ce lieu où repose mon père.

### The Garden of Stones

translated by Cesia Minemann

Tomorrow, or perhaps later on, for there will always be time  
I will go to where he resides, to the garden of the dead  
The ship of the living drowns in sorrow  
When those who have parted leave it behind at port.

And while my memories emerge like water  
From the infinite depths of his silence, a voice will be reborn  
And I will see that harrowing stone move  
And everything which is no more will appear before me.

The story of his life, which made up my childhood  
Will run its course gently beneath his dark tomb  
And if, of his past, I've nothing left but sheer ignorance,  
The name he has given to me is to be his memory.

I will close my eyes from the light that blinds them  
And when I have understood the things that mystery has  
Hidden within the deepest secret of the stones,  
I will take leave of the place where my father resides.

### Excerpt from Magie (1938)

by Henri Michaux

Dès que je la vis, je la désirai.

D'abord pour la séduire, je répandis des plaines et des plaines. Des plaines  
sorties de mon regard s'allongeaient, douces, aimables, rassurantes.

Les idées de plaines allèrent à sa rencontre, et sans le savoir, elle s'y prome-  
nait, s'y trouvant satisfaite.

L'ayant bien rassurée, je la possédai.

Cela fait, après quelque repos et quiétude, reprenant mon naturel, je laissai  
réapparaître mes lances, mes haillons, mes précipices.

Elle sentit un grand froid et qu'elle s'était trompée tout à fait sur mon  
compte.

Elle s'en alla la mine défaite et creusée, et comme si on l'avait volée.

### Excerpt from Magic

translated by April Hayley

As soon as I saw her, I desired her.

At first, in order to seduce her, I spread out plains upon plains.

Plains emerged from my gaze and stretched out soft, pleasant, reassuring.

Ideas of plains went out to meet her, and without knowing it, she walked  
about on them, finding satisfaction there.

When I had sufficiently reassured her, I possessed her.

That done, and after a little rest and quiet, I resumed my natural ways and let  
my spears, rags, and precipices appear.

She felt a great chill and sensed she had been completely fooled by me.

She went off with a hollow, defeated look, as if someone had robbed her.



## The Misfortunes of Immortals

by Paul Éluard

translated by Jesse Crooks

### THE PROPER TIME TO HOLD YOUR TONGUE (L'HEURE DE SE TAIRE)

As if her lips were seen reflecting on the water, the annoyed coquette carries lamplight in her eyes, as plump as love affairs. She likes to demonstrate her faculty for dangling superficial smiles like shimmering bait. She extends her fingers, the skin of an Amazon with the strength of her arms. She extends the mast of her breasts at the foot of ruins and falls asleep at the twilight of her fingernails, gnawed upon by climbing plants.

### FORGOTTEN PLEASURES (PLAISIRS OUBLIÉS)

At the edge of the jetty, running from the sea, leaving his prison, returning from the Indies with the confidence of great indomitable machines, Robert crafted in his curiosity a corridor of pinpricks. Sticky buds perk up and take hold of his eyelids. Grief reverts to warmth, and despite the grief you can admire the intrepid soul, the amazing courage of this misfortune; you can admire a certain brief, melancholic dance, uncalled for under these circumstances: the desire to sleep, which smoothes his hair.

### BETWEEN TWO POLES OF POLITENESS (ENTRE DEUX PÔLES DE LA POLITESSE)

This acrobat, drenched to the bones, carries delicate words to you in her goiter; this acrobat, be forewarned, bears the word "delicate." The dulcet diapason of childhood has vanished. The gentle nudity of the branches spills out an odor of sanctity before the mountain. She took refuge in a ball that heralds arcs of fever, in soap bubbles that drunkards hold in their hands to protect themselves from glistening worms, to uproot peas, to escape from the paths of the charging bulls.

This odor of sanctity maintains the disguises of saints Peter and Paul, who have returned incognito to see how the world is doing. Alas! The taste of commerce extends to the flattened promontories where all memory has vanished of the seeds of the hats that took flight in full-blown winter.

### PEACE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE (LA PAIX À LA CAMPAGNE)

In the evening, when failing luck hollows the hands of little girls, when fire gathers all Old World creepers and stones from the cities fill in cellars, dancing women of wax and metal appear through the indifference of cripples who patiently file down the form of a human body. Their companions, happy as always, hear their perpetual, monotonous song, and their children play upon intact scalps with pieces of the latest readings.

## Un Certain Plume

by Henri Micheaux

### Un homme paisible (1930)

Etendant les mains hors du lit, Plume fut étonné de ne pas rencontrer le mur. «Tiens, pensa-t-il, les fourmis l'auront mangé...» et il se rendormit.

Peu après, sa femme l'attrapa et le secoua.

« Regarde, dit-elle, fainéant ! Pendant que tu étais occupé à dormir, on nous a volé notre maison. » En effet, un ciel intact s'étendait de tous côtés. « Bah, la chose est faite », pensa-t-il. Peu après, un bruit se fit entendre. C'était un train qui arrivait sur eux à toute allure. « De l'air pressé qu'il a, pensa-t-il, il arrivera sûrement avant nous » et il se rendormit.

Ensuite, le froid le réveilla. Il était tout trempé de sang. Quelques morceaux de sa femme gisaient près de lui. «Avec le sang, pensa-t-il, surgissent toujours quantité de désagréments ; si ce train pouvait n'être pas passé, j'en serais fort heureux. Mais puisqu'il est déjà passé... » et il se rendormit.

- Voyons, disait le juge, comment expliquez vous que votre femme se soit blessée au point qu'on l'ait trouvée partagée en huit morceaux, sans que vous, qui étiez à côté, ayez pu faire un geste pour l'en empêcher, sans même vous en être aperçu ? Voilà le mystère. Toute l'affaire est là-dedans.

- Sur ce chemin, je ne peux pas l'aider, pensa Plume, et il se rendormit.

- L'exécution aura lieu demain. Accusé, avez-vous quelque chose à ajouter?

- Excusez-moi, dit-il, je n'ai pas suivi l'affaire. Et il se rendormit.

## A Certain Plume

translated by April Hayley

### A Peaceful Man (1930)

Stretching his hands out beyond the bed, Plume was surprised not to encounter the wall. "Crikey!" he thought, "the ants must have eaten it," and he went back to sleep.

A little later his wife took hold of him and shook him. "Look!" she said, "You sloth! Our house was stolen while you were busy sleeping." And sure enough, an unbroken sky stretched out on all sides above them. "Oh well! The thing is over and done with," he thought.

A little later a noise resounded. It was a train, coming at them full speed. "Judging by the rush it appears to be in," he thought, "it will certainly arrive before we do," and he went back to sleep. Next he was awakened by the cold. He was completely drenched in blood. A few pieces of his wife were lying beside him. "When there's blood," he thought, "there is always so much unpleasantness; if only that train had not gone by, I would be very happy. But since it has already passed..." And he went back to sleep again.

"See here," the judge was saying, "how do you explain that your wife was wounded so badly that she was found in eight pieces, while you, at her side, made no effort to prevent it from happening, and did not even notice it? That's the mystery. The whole case lies there."

"I can be of no help on this issue," thought Plume, and he went back to sleep.

"The execution will take place tomorrow. Prisoner, do you have anything to add?"

"Forgive me," he said, "I haven't been following this case." And he went back to sleep.

## Excerpt from *Alléluia pour une femme-jardin*

by René Depestre (1981)

Elle avait à peine treize ans quand on commença, à Jacmel, à parler de sa beauté. Trois ans plus tard, on vint de Port-au-Prince la chercher pour en faire une reine de carnaval. Durant le défilé, hommes et femmes de la capitale se livrèrent à toutes les frénésies de l'admiration. Tout en Isabelle Ramonet s'offrait en spectacle et disait aux gens : regardez-moi bien, c'est peut-être une fois, à chaque siècle, qu'on voit passer un être humain dont la chair proclame si haut qu'elle est une aventure éblouissante de l'espèce!

Au passage du char d'Isabelle, le transport de la foule prit des formes mystiques : un jeune homme, après avoir échangé un sourire avec la reine, grimpa d'une haleine sur un cocotier de l'avenue, en poussant des cris d'animal blessé. Un paysan d'âge mûr jeta d'une voix étranglée : « Je te donne une main si tu me lances un baiser ! » Aussitôt du haut de son trône, Isabelle adressa un baiser à l'inconnu. Celui-ci, tenant sa promesse, sortit de sa poche un coutelas et porta à son poignet gauche un coup d'une violence inouïe. Puis, saisissant la main coupée, il la projeta aux pieds de tante Isa, éclaboussant de sang frais le bas de sa toilette royale. On emmena discrètement le fou et la fête continua avec encore plus de fureur.

Le carnaval passé, des centaines de prétendants demandèrent la jeune fille en mariage. Elle les écarta avec grâce et rentra tout de go à Jacmel. Un arc de triomphe l'attendait à la porte de la petite ville de Sud-Ouest haïtien. « Ce retour tient de l'apothéose d'une princesse des Mille et Une Nuits », annonça le lendemain un journal local. Un an plus tard, elle épousa le fils d'un exportateur de café qui mourut peu de temps après dans un accident de motocyclette.

Le bruit circula que Daniel Locroy était mort d'une mystérieuse maladie qu'il avait contractée dans les bras de sa femme : à mesure qu'il baisait Isabelle, il voyait ses organes génitaux se réduire comme un peau de chagrin. Quand un matin, à son réveil, il découvrit que son sexe avait disparu et qu'il ne lui restait plus qu'une moitié de testicule, il se tua d'une balle à la tête. Un médecin mit fin à ces bobards hallucinants : il avait vu le corps de Locroy déchiqueté au pied d'un arbre, sur la route de Meyer, parmi les débris de la moto.

De nouveaux soupirants apparurent sous les fenêtres de la jeune veuve. Elle signifia fermement à ce monde haletant qu'elle n'entendait pas se remarier. A force de se dérober aux fêtes organisées en son honneur, aux promenades à cheval, aux acrostiches, poèmes et lettres d'amour qui lui étaient adressés, aux *wangas* et aux intrigues provinciales du sang chaud, elle devint le diagramme mythique de la ville. Sa présence s'intégra parfaitement au paysage comme les vieux arbres de la place d'Armes, les eaux du golfe avec la coque rouillée de l'*Albano*, ou la rivière La Gosseline.

## Excerpt from Alléluia pour une femme-jardin

translated by April Hayley

She was barely thirteen years old when they started to speak of her beauty in Jacmel. Three years later they went to Port-au-Prince in the hope of having her crowned Queen of Carnival. During the parade, all the men and women of the capital confessed their frenzied admiration for her. Everything about Isabelle Ramonet put her on display and told them: take a good look! It is perhaps only once a century that a human being like me will pass before you, one whose very flesh proclaims her a dazzling specimen of humankind.

At the moment Isabelle's float passed by, the fervor of the crowd took on mystical forms: after exchanging a smile with the queen, one young man climbed a coconut tree on the avenue in a single breath, whimpering like a wounded animal. A peasant cried out in a strangled voice, "I'll give you my hand if you throw me a kiss!" Straight away, from the height of her throne, Isabelle blew a kiss to the stranger. Keeping his promise, the peasant withdrew a butcher's knife from his pocket and struck at his left wrist with unusual violence. Then, taking hold of his severed hand, he threw it at the feet of Aunt Isa, splattering the bottom of her royal gown with fresh blood. The madman was discreetly led away and the celebration continued with heightened passion.

By the end of Carnaval, hundreds of suitors had proposed marriage to the young woman. She gracefully dismissed them all and returned straight to Jacmel. An *arc de triomphe* awaited her at the entrance to the little town in southwest Haiti. "This Return Marks the Crowning Glory of a Princess of the Arabian Nights," announced the local newspaper the following day. A year later she married the son of a coffee exporter who would die soon after in a motorcycle accident.

Word spread that Daniel Locroy had died from a mysterious illness contracted in the arms of his wife: as he made love to Isabelle, he saw his genitals shrink like a *peau de chagrin*.<sup>1</sup> When he discovered one morning that his penis had disappeared completely and only one of his testicles remained, he killed himself with a bullet to the head. The doctor put an end to this tall tale: he had seen Locroy's body torn and ragged at the foot of a tree, among the wreckage of a motorcycle on Meyer road.

Once again, suitors appeared under the windows of the young widow. She firmly made it known to this panting public that she did not plan to remarry. By repeatedly shunning celebrations organized in her honor, avoiding horseback rides, acrostics, poems, and love letters addressed to her, and ignoring wargas<sup>2</sup> and hot-blooded provincial intrigues, Isabelle became the mythological blueprint of the village. Her presence was perfectly integrated with the landscape, like the old trees at Place d'Armes, the gulf waters with their rusty Albano remains, or the Gosseline River.

<sup>1</sup>An allusion to a novel by Balzac. Known in English as *the Wild Ass's Skin* or *the Magic Skin*, it is the moral tale of an impoverished young man who acquires a donkey pelt that will grant all of his wishes. However, with every wish the skin shrinks, along with his life-force.

<sup>2</sup>evil spells in Creole.

# German

## Deutsche Mjüsings

by Chris Michael

O, tu häw multipel Länguetsches unter mei Bält!  
Ai lawf bieng eh Spieker vor al Siesens!  
Vieling left aut in mäni Internationalokäsions,  
Ai staarted Deutsch vor perßonal Riesens.

Kamming fraam Jiers of Romänzlänguetsches,  
Deutsch ätt virßt käm äß eh bitt of eh Schak!  
Bei mei sekond Simester intu ltt, hauewer,  
Ai velt Ai hätt pikt ltz misterios Lak.

Albieit, sommteims Ai tänd tu approotsch  
Fraam mei Inglisch Peunt-of-Wju,  
Ai hoop tu ficks al riemänning Kinks  
In "Intermediät Deutsch Tu".

So vor al mei päschent Deutschprofeßors  
Despeit mei fein Skills tu mißkonstru;  
Ai ofer nau eh teini bitt of Proos,  
Tu seh "Vielen Dank" tu ju!

## Ausfahrt

by Ingeborg Bachmann

Vom Lande steigt Rauch auf.  
Die kleine Fischerhütte behalt im Aug,  
denn die Sonne wird sinken,  
ehe du zehn Meilen zurückgelegt hast.

Das dunkle Wasser, tausendäugig,  
schlägt die Wimpern von weisser Gischt auf,  
um dich anzusehen, gross und lang,  
dreissig Tage lang.

Auch wenn das Schiff hart stampft,  
und einen unsicheren Schritt tut,  
steh ruhig auf Deck.

An den Tischen essen sie jetzt  
den geräucherten Fisch;  
dann werden die Männer hinknien  
und die Netze flicken  
aber nachts wird geschlafen,  
eine Stunde oder zwei Stunden,  
und ihre Hände werden weich sein,  
frei von Salz und Öl,  
weich wie das Brot des Traumes,  
von dem sie brechen.

Die erste Welle der Nacht schlägt ans Ufer,  
die zweite erreicht schon dich.  
Aber wenn du scharf hinüberschaust,  
kannst du den Baum noch sehen,  
der trotzig den Arm hebt  
- einen hat ihm der Wind schon abgeschlagen  
- und du denkst: wie lange noch,  
wie lange noch  
wird das krumme Holz den Wettern standhalten?  
Vom Land ist nichts mehr zu sehen.  
Du hättest dich mit einer Hand in die Sandbank  
krallen  
oder mit einer Locke an die Klippen heften sollen.

In die Muscheln blasend, gleiten die Ungeheuer des Meers  
auf die Rücken der Wellen, sie reiten und schlagen  
mit blanken Säbeln die Tage in Stücke, eine rote Spur  
bleibt im Wasser, dort legt dich der Schlaf hin,  
auf den Rest deiner Stunden,  
und dir schwinden die Sinne.

Da ist etwas mit den Tauen geschehen,  
man ruft dich, und du bist froh,  
dass man dich braucht. Das Beste  
ist die Arbeit auf den Schiffen,  
die weithin fahren,  
das Tauknüpfen, das Wasserschöpfen,  
das Wändedichten und das Hüten der Fracht.  
Das Beste ist, müde zu sein und am Abend  
hinzufallen. Das Beste ist, am Morgen,  
mit dem ersten Licht, hell zu werden,  
gegen den unverrückbaren Himmel zu stehen,  
der ungangbaren Wasser nicht zu achten,  
und das Schiff über die Wellen zu heben,  
auf das immerwiederkehrende Sonnenufer zu.

## Setting off

*translated by Emily Steinberg*

Smoke unfurls from the land.  
Keep the tiny fishing hut in sight,  
For the sun will sink,  
before you've put ten miles behind you.

Thousand-eyed, the dark water  
opens its white-foam lashes,  
gazing at you, deep and long,  
thirty days long.

And if the boat pitches hard  
and takes an unsure step  
stand quiet on the deck.

At the tables  
they are eating smoked fish;  
after, the men will kneel down  
to mend the nets,  
yet nights they sleep  
only an hour or two,  
and their hands will be soft,  
free of salt and oil,  
soft as the bread they tear into  
in their dreams with their teeth.

The first wave of night strikes the shore,  
the second has already reached you.  
If you look hard, you can still see the tree  
across there, defiant  
lifting its arm  
-the wind has already struck off one of its arms  
-and you think: how much longer,  
how much longer  
will the crooked wood withstand the storms?  
There's no more land to be seen.  
You should have dug your hand into the sandbank,  
pinned yourself to the rocks by a single curl.

Blowing into the shells, sea monsters stray  
on the spines of the waves, riding with shiny sabers  
slashing the days into shards; in the surf  
a red trail lingers, where sleep lays you down  
for the rest of your hours.  
It all sends you spinning.

But something has gone wrong with the ropes,  
someone calls you, and you are glad  
to be needed. Best of all  
is the labor aboard ships  
that sail out far,  
the tying of ropes, the drawing of water,  
the sealing of cracks, the stowing of cargo.  
Best of all to be tired and collapse  
in the evening. Best to rise lucent  
in the first morning light,  
to challenge the unfaltering sky,  
to pay no heed to the impassable tides,  
and to hoist the vessel over the tops of the waves  
toward the ever-constant shore of the sun.

## Vor Irak

by Emily Sullivan Sanford

Endlich ist der Tag da.  
Im Kopf habe ich nur Musik  
*Hallo, Schatz! Hallo, Schatz! Hallo, Schatz!*  
Weil deutsche Züge immer still sind.  
Endlich Zoologischer Garten  
Keine Zeit, ich sehe was ich kenne,  
ich muß laufen und schreien und mich entscheiden,  
"He, Ossi!"

du darfst mich nicht "Ossi" in einem wessi Bahnhof nennen

Kraut

Lauterheuchlerischerethnozentrierterersäuglingmitkaugummiim-  
mundundfußaufdemtisch  
Das ist die Gegenwartsbewältigung  
Exklusiv für Amis

ich muß schließlich sterben  
ich muß nicht jeden anderen töten

Chrabine Sistiansen und zwei Fragen: wieviel haben Sie oder  
wollen Sie?

ich darf einen Beruf, ein Zuhause, und einen Ehemann wählen  
ich darf meine Kinder nicht wählen

Keine Amerikanerin

ich sollte immer reisen, schreiben, beschreiben, lächeln, und  
weinen  
ich sollte keinem anderen weh tun

Die Euros klettern

ich kann meinen Akzent loswerden  
ich kann keinen deutschen Akzent haben

Sie müssen vor dem Krieg zu mir kommen

ich möchte manche Sachen vergessen  
ich möchte noch nicht vergessen

## Before Iraq

by Emily Sullivan Sanford

Finally the day has come.  
I only have music in my head  
Hello, Darling! Hello, Darling! Hello, Darling!  
because German trains are always silent.  
Finally Zoologischergarten  
No time, I see what I recognize,  
I have to run and shout and decide,  
"Hey, East German!"

You can't call me "East German" in a West German train station

Ya kraut!

You loudcapitalisthypocriticalethnocentricinfantwithguminyour-  
mouthandfeetonthetable!  
This is the Struggle of Dealing with Your Present\*  
Exclusive for Yankees

I have to die eventually  
I do not have to kill anyone else

Chrabine Sistiansen\*\* and two questions: how many do you want or have  
wanted?

I am allowed to choose my profession, my home, and my husband  
I am not allowed to choose my children

No American

I should always travel, transcribe, describe, smile, and cry  
I should not hurt anyone else

The Euros climb

I can lose my accent  
I cannot have a German accent

You have to come visit me before the war

I want to forget some things  
I do not want to forget yet

\*This is a play on a German word meaning "The struggle of dealing with the past" referring to  
WWII

\*\*Sabine Christiansen is a fluff news reporter in Germany

# Hungarian

## Szerelmes Vers

by Radnoti Miklós

Ott fenn a habos, fodor égen a lomha nap áll még,  
majd hűvösen int s tovaúszik.  
És itt a szemedben a gyöngyszínű, gyöngye verőfény  
permetegén ragyog által a kék.  
Sárgán fut az ösvény,  
vastag avar fedí régl!  
Mert itt van az ősz. A diót leverik s a szobákban  
már csöppen a csönd a falakról,  
engedd fel a válladon álmodozó kicsi gerlét,  
hull a levél, közelít a fagy és  
eldől a merev rét,  
hallod a halk zuhanást.  
Ó évszakok őre, te drága, szelíd, de szeretlek!  
s nem szeretek már soha mást.

### Love Poem

*translated by Mihaly Dunai*

Up there in the foamy, fleecy sky the lazy sun stays still,  
Then coldly waves and sinks away.  
And here, in your seed-pearl eyes the dim blue  
Light is shining through.  
Thick autumn leaves have covered  
The yellow path for long.  
Fall is here. They collect the nuts  
And silence drips from the draperies,  
Let the musing little dove fly off your shoulders,  
The leaves still fall, frost approaches,  
The austere field is dying now,  
You can hear its silent sounds  
O guards of seasons, you tame and tender, how I love you!  
And I will never love anybody else.

# Italian



## Avanti

by Jared Roehrig

In vent'anni avrò parlato  
Con un bambino sotto le scale.  
La mia stanza sarà coperta di fogli,  
di cartoline, e di sabbia secca.  
La voce sarà  
anche lei secca  
per aver aspirato la sabbia.  
Discuteremo - forse—come ti è finita la fascia sul  
ginocchio  
E la faccia mia rabbrivirà al pensiero  
della tua pena timida

Una voce strana ci chiamerà dal salone.  
Ammettiamo di non poterci più isolare da tutti.  
Ti prendo per mano e entriamo insieme.

## Forwards

by Jared Roehrig

*In twenty years, I will have spoken  
to a cold child under the stairs.  
My room will be covered in papers,  
Postcards and dry sand-  
my voice will also be dry  
from having breathed in the sand.  
We'll talk about - maybe- how you got that bandage on  
your knee  
And my face will wince  
At your shy pain.*

*A queer voice will call us from the living room.  
We tell ourselves that we can not hide from the group  
any longer  
I take you by the hand and we go in together.*

## In Dietro

by Jared Roehrig

Il mare circonda  
Una schiena appoggiata  
Su una roccia immersa in  
Un mare d'affetto.

T'ho vista in fondo  
Di una strada luminosa  
Senza pianto di dolore nè  
dubbio di vento.

Nudo dal torso all'aria  
Come uno stelo delle fattorie  
Ho abbassato una mano  
Verso la roccia circondata dal  
mare.

Ma è colpa mia!  
Il mare si muove  
Quando l'orecchio lo  
percepisce  
E la mano diventa una vena  
senza oceano.

## Backwards

by Jared Roehrig

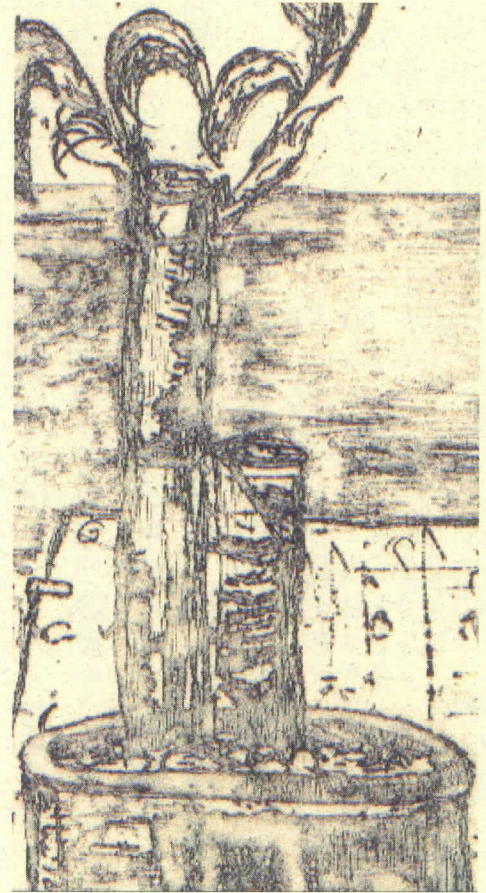
the sea encircles  
a slender back  
on a rock inside  
A sea of affection

i saw you at the foot  
of a brightened path  
without a cry of pain  
Nor doubt of wind

nude from torso to air  
like a farmhouse's stalk  
i lowered a hand  
For the sea encircling rock

But ah, how wrong i am!!  
the sea stirs  
when the ear perceives it  
And the hand becomes an ocean-less  
vein

**Japanese**



ねども、武蔵国住人、熊谷次郎直実」となのり申。「さては、なんちにあうては、なのるまじいぞ。なんちがためにはよい敵ぞ。名のらずとも頭をとって人にとへ。見知らうずるぞ」とそのたまひける。熊谷、「あッばれ大將軍や。此人一人討ちたてまつたり共、まくべきいくさに勝べきやうもなし。又討ちたてまつらずとも、勝べきいくさにまくる事もよもあらじ。小二郎がうす手負たるをだに、直実は心ぐるしうこそ思ふに、此殿の父、討たれぬと聞いて、いか計かなげき給はんずらん。あはれたすけたてまつらばや」と思ひて、うしろをきツと見ければ、土肥・梶原五十騎ばかりでつゞいたり。熊谷、涙をおさへて申けるは、「たすけまゐらせんとは存候へども、御方の軍兵、雲霞のごとく候。よものがれさせ給はじ。人手にかけまゐらせんより、同くは、直実が手にかけまゐらせて、後の御孝養をこそ仕候はめ」と申ければ、「たゞとくく頭をとれ」とそのたまひける。熊谷、あまりにいとほしくて、いづくに刀をたつべしともおぼえず、目もくれ心も消えはてて、前後不覚におぼえけれども、さてしもあるべき事ならねば、なくく頭をぞかいてンげる。「あはれ、弓矢とる身ほど口惜かりけるものはなし。武芸の家に生れずは、何とてかゝる憂き目をば見るべき。なさけなうも討ちたてまつるものかな」とかきくどき、袖をかほにおしあてて、さめくとぞなきみたる。良久しうあッて、

### 敦盛最期

いくさやぶれにければ、熊谷次郎直実、「平家の君達、たすけ舟に乗らんと汀の方へぞ落ちたまふらむ。あッばれよからう大將軍にくまばや」とて、磯の方へあゆまするところに、ねりぬきに鶴ぬうたる直垂に、萌黄匂の鎧着て、鉄形うツたる甲の緒しめ、こがねづくりの太刀をはき、切斑の矢負ひ、しげどうの弓持ッて、連錢葦毛なる馬に黄覆輪の鞍置いて乗ッたる武者一騎、沖なる舟に目をかけて、海へざツとうちいれ、五六段ばかりおよがせたるを、熊谷、「あれは大將軍とこそ見まゐらせ候へ。まさなうも敵にうしろを見せさせたまふものかな。かへさせ給へ」と、扇をあげてまねきければ、招かれて、とツてかへす。汀にうちあがらんとするところに、おし並べてむずとくんでどうど落ち、とツておさへて頸をかゝんと甲をおしあふのけて見ければ、年十六七ばかりなるが、うす化粧して、かねぐる也。我子の小次郎がよはひ程にて、容顔まことに美麗也ければ、いづくに刀を立べしともおぼえず。「抑いかなる人にてましと候ぞ。名のらせ給へ、たすけまゐらせん」と申せば、「汝はたそ」ととひ給ふ。「物、そのもので候は

## The Death of Atsumori

by Heike Monogatari

translated by Yari Wolinsky

With the Heike utterly defeated in battle, Kumagae-no-Jirō-Naozane walked his horse toward the shore and thought to himself: "The young Heike will want to get aboard their waiting ships, so they will likely flee down to the shoreline. Ah, if only I could find an eminent commander to grapple with." Just then, Naozane noticed a single mounted warrior riding down the beach. He was wearing a robe embroidered with cranes in *nerinuki* silk, green laced-armor, and a horned helmet tied with cord. He carried a gilded sword at his side; upon his back were mottled eagle feather arrows and a black lacquered bow, and he was riding upon a mottled roan horse with a gold-studded saddle. The warrior had waded out some 500 or 600 steps into the sea toward a boat waiting in the offing when Naozane raised a fan and beckoned him, saying, "Ah, you appear to be a commanding officer! You know it's cowardly to show your back to an enemy. Return, sir!" Hearing this, the rider came back.

When the warrior rode back up onto the shore, Naozane came alongside, seized hold of him, and with a great crash toppled them both to the ground, where Naozane held his opponent pinned. After forcing aside the warrior's helmet to cut off his head, Naozane saw that he was a youth of only sixteen or seventeen years, and that he bore light makeup and blackened teeth, a mark of nobility. Naozane's own son, Kojirō, was about the same age, and this boy was so truly beautiful that he could not find a place to strike with his sword.

"What sort of person are you? Tell me your name. I will not slay you."

The boy only responded, "Who are you?"

"No one important. I am Kumagae-no-Jirō-Naozane, a resident of Musashi province," he said.

"Well, I do not need to announce myself to one such as you. But I am a worthy opponent. Though I do not tell my name, take my head and ask people of me. Someone will recognize me," the boy exclaimed.

Naozane thought to himself: "Ah, he certainly is a commander. Killing this one person will not turn a won battle into a loss. And, sparing him will not turn a loss into a victory. When I think of how I suffered when Kojirō suffered a slight wound, it would be nothing like that of this young lord's father should he hear that his son had been defeated. Oh, if only I could spare him." With a quick glance behind him, he saw Sanehira and Kagetoki leading a group of fifty horsemen in his direction.

さてもあるべきならねば、よろひ直垂をとって、頸をつまんとしけるに、錦袋にいられたる笛をぞ、腰にさゝれたる。「あないとほし、この暁、城のうちにて管絃し給ひつるは、此人にておはしけり。当時は、東国の勢なん万騎あるらめども、いくさの陣へ笛持つ人はよもあらじ。上臈は、猶もやさしかりけり」とて、九郎御曹司の見参に入たりければ、これを見る人、涙を流さずといふ事なし。

後に聞けば、修理大夫経盛の子息に大夫篤盛とて、生年十七にぞなられける。それよりしてこそ熊谷が発心の思ひはすゝみけれ。件の笛は、おほち忠盛笛の上手にて、鳥羽院より給はられたりけるとぞ聞えし。経盛相伝せられたりしを、篤盛器量たるによつて持たれたりけるとかや。名をば小枝とぞ申ける。狂言綺語のことわりと言ひながら、遂に讚仏乗の因となるこそ哀なれ。

Naozane choked back his tears and said, "I would spare you, but my comrades are swarming around us. There is no way to escape. It is better that you die by my hands than someone else's, for I will say prayers for you after your death."

"Just take my head quickly," the boy said.

Naozane, feeling pity for his enemy, could find no place to strike with his sword. His eyes became dark, his senses reeled, and he was hardly conscious; but matters could not go on this way, and so, crying, Naozane finally took the head.

"Oh, nothing is as difficult as the life of a warrior. Had I not been born into a martial house, I would never need to suffer such awful experiences. I am so terrible for killing him!" Naozane muttered on and on and finally pushed his sleeve to his face and wept anguished tears.

After some time had passed, as things could not progress so, Naozane, while removing the boy's robe to wrap about the head, found a flute wrapped in a brocade bag stuck at the waist. "Ah, how sad!" Naozane thought, "He must have been one of the people playing instruments in the castle this morning at dawn. Even though there must be tens of thousands of Genji horsemen in the Eastern army now, there is not a single man who would bring a flute to battle. These noblemen are so refined."

When Naozane went to meet Minamoto-no-Yoshitsune, there was not one man who, upon seeing the flute, did not overflow with tears. Later, it was heard that the boy was Atsumori, the son of the Tsunemori of Palace Repairs, and was just seventeen years old. From then on, Naozane's thoughts continually turned toward becoming a monk.

Supposedly, Retired Emperor Go-Toba gave the flute to Atsumori's grandfather, Tadamori, who was a skilled musician. Tsunemori inherited it and gave it to Atsumori because he also had musical talent. The flute was known as *Saeda*.

As music is spoken of as a worldly thing, it is all the more touching that it would become the cause of one's entrance into a religious life.

# Latin

**Selection from Catullus**  
**Poem 51**

Ille mi par esse deo videtur,  
Ille, si fas est, superare divos,  
Qui sedens adversus identidem te  
Spectat et audit

Dulce ridentem, misero quod omnis  
Eripit sensus mihi: nam simul te,  
Lesbia, aspexi, nihil est super mi

.....

lingua sed torpet, tenuis sub artus  
flamma demanat, sonitu suopte  
tintinant aures, gemina teguntur  
lumina nocte.

Otium, Catulle, tibi molestum est:  
Otio exsultas nimiumque gestis:  
Otium et reges prius et beatas  
Perdidit urbes.

**Catullus Poem 51**  
*free translation by Amy January*

He, that dream-shadow of me  
sits across from you again and  
like a god he sees and hears all  
that you are

Sweet laughter, you destroy me  
minute by minute and until  
I see you, my Lesbia, there will be  
nothing before or after me.

And though I lie silent, within me  
flames and furies deafen my thoughts  
darken my days and so my eyes  
see like night.

So I wander and wonder this  
in all my free hours and here  
I fall like the great kings of old,  
I fall like Troy, like Greece, like Rome.

# Portuguese

" 'Nuvens, proibam esse sol vermelho de me ofuscar... estendam seu sedoso véu sobre essas paredes vermelhas, sobre essas pessoas enrubescidas... esse chinês... por que ele me olha assim, soltando baforadas vermelhas, nuvens de um rubro aroma?... envolvam-me, Nuvens... tirem esse ridículo tapete áspero de debaixo de mim!... deixem-me deitar em seu divã de um branco aveludado... esse chinês... de onde, de que maldito confim do Oriente veio esse demônio de bigodes eternos e de bochechas róseas?... por que ele se imiscui nas rosas nuvens deste mundo?... como ele chegou aqui?... deixe-me sozinho com as níveas rosas...'

- Senhor Olivier? O senhor ainda está doente?

Do líquido negro se desprendia um diáfano filete de fumaça. Olivier levou a xícara aos lábios. De olhos fechados, sentiu o amargor descer-lhe pela garganta. Viver o cansava. Só não o cansava aquela mulher que passava pela estreita rua de paralelepípedos, em frente ao café. A tênue sombra que os postes de luz projetavam atrás dela parecia encará-lo através do vidro, convidando-o a segui-la.

Olivier abriu os olhos. Os espelhos nas paredes do café multiplicavam as dimensões do ambiente, mas a luz difusa da única lâmpada acesa, sobre sua mesa, conferia a Olivier umaimensidão fantasmagórica no escuro da casa. Na esquina da rua lá fora uma mulher perdia-se no nevoeiro noturno, em meio ao brilho abafado da iluminação urbana.

Ele pôs-se a caminhar com passos largos à procura daqueles olhos que haviam visto os seus, mesmo por trás da cerração de suas pálpebras. A sola dos sapatos ecoava fortemente em meio ao perigoso silêncio das casas de ópio e dos prostíbulos adormecidos. Crescendo mais e mais nos ouvidos de Olivier, o doce som dos sapatos daquela mulher vinha se harmonizar ao moto perpétuo de sua caminhada.

Ela abriu uma sombrinha que carregava sobre o antebraço, equilibrando-a sobre o ombro. Pouco a pouco a face dela foi se revelando por trás da sombrinha e da cortina dos longos fios de cabelo a lamber seus ombros.

Primeiro, a morena pele das bochechas.

Em seguida, os olhos amendoados, o nariz macio, os lábios carnudos.

No entanto, esse rosto que Olivier observava agora, emoldurado pelas mechas castanhas que lhe acariciavam o busto, era diferente daquele outro, que surgira para ele no café. Somente os olhos, oblíquos, ambíguos, que outrora haviam perscrutado a sua alma com uma estranha acuidade, permaneciam os mesmos.

- Não é a primeira vez que acontece... ser seguida por parecer ser alguém que não sou.

- Não foi isso o que eu quis dizer.

- Homem algum diz o que pensa - ela disse, segurando a mão de Olivier. A despeito do café que tomara, ele adormeceu.

Quando abriu seus olhos, Olivier estava sobre um muro baixo, na beira da Baía. Do outro lado das águas, parcamente iluminadas pelas lanternas dos barcos, dormiam as desoladas vilas de pescadores de Nictheroy. Olivier contemplava a Ilha Fiscal, resplandecendo no baile da monarquia. Do interior de seus arcos neo-góticos vinha o som etéreo de flautas doces, abafado vez por outra pelos risos e pelas palmas dos participantes da festa, alheios ao mundo.

Deitou-se na amurada. O céu estrelado sobre o mar era indescritivelmente deslumbrante. Talvez somente se assemelhasse, em beleza e em um tipo peculiar de sensualidade -

aquela que só se manifesta quando a vista se escurece, o tato se aguça e o mundo ao redor parece desfalecer

- àquela mulher que acariciava seu rosto naquele momento.

Olivier sentiu o doce aroma do café subir-lhe às narinas. O café estava em uma ebulição de risos e vozes naquela noite. Somente a sua mesa, à beira da janela, repousava, mergulhada em um escuro silêncio. Todo aquele barulho, toda aquela efusão, toda aquela felicidade pareciam enxotá-lo do ambiente. Mas ele tinha que esperar. À frente dele, uma cadeira vazia.

Um tocador de flauta doce passou pela rua já esvaziada pela hora avançada. Ninguém dentro do café o ouviu, nem mesmo Olivier, que viu o homem mas não ouviu o som.

O café esvaziou-se. Somente Olivier permaneceu, imerso na penumbra.

Naquela noite, ela entrou no café, sentando-se em frente a Olivier. Encarou aquelas duas esferas negras que a fitavam, que a perscrutaram mesmo através da sombra das pálpebras.

Olivier segurou a mão dela entre as suas. Ele pareceu encontrar naquela mão, naquele caos de ligamentos, nervos, vasos, sangue e tecidos, um motivo para manter seu próprio caos interno, para não resolvê-lo da forma mais direta e - indolor.

- Siga aquele flautista. Você está doente - ela disse.

O som da flauta doce fez-se ouvir na rua, outra vez. Olivier pôde ouvi-lo.

- Ele tem a solução para o meu mal?

Ela olhou para a janela. Um longo suspiro transpassou os olhos dela.

Olivier correu pelas ruas e pelos becos estreitos do Centro do Rio. Através das sombras e debaixo da luz dos postes, ele procurava aquele agri-doce e melancólico som. Até que, quebrando o silêncio ominoso da noite, ouviu novamente a flauta doce. Seguiu aquela melodia, e chegou à Ilha Fiscal, uma esmeralda verde a brilhar à beira da Baía.

Todo som cessou. Olivier via homens de casaca e mulheres em vestidos resplandecentes no interior do palacete, mas eles estavam em silêncio. Contornando a edificação por fora, deparou-se com um homem entrelaçado a ela, àquela mulher que vira no café.

" 'Clouds, prevent this red sun from dimming me... extend your silky veil on these red walls, on these blushed people... this Chinese man... why does he look at me this way, shouting these reddened puffs, clouds of a red aroma?... surround me, Clouds... take this ridiculous and rough rug from under me!... let me lie on your velvety white divan... this Chinese man... whence, from what ruined edge of the Orient came this devil with eternal mustaches and rosy cheeks?... why does he meddle with the rosy clouds of this world? how did he arrive here?... leave me alone with the snow-white roses...' - Mister Olivier? Are you still ill?

From the black liquid flowed a thin flush of smoke. Olivier led the cup to his lips. With his eyes closed, he felt the bitter taste slide down his throat. Living tired him. Only that woman did not tire him, that woman that passed through the narrow street of cobblestones in front of the café. The thin shadow that the light-post shed behind her seemed to face him through the glass, inviting him to follow her.

Olivier opened his eyes. The mirrors on the walls of the café multiplied the dimensions of the room; the diffuse light of the only lit lamp, on his table, imbued Olivier with a ghost-like immenseness in the darkness of the house. Outside, at the corner of the street, a woman dwindled in the nightly mist, swollen by the muffled brightness of urban illumination.

He started to walk with wide steps in search of those eyes that had seen his, even through the haze of his eyelids. The sole of the shoes echoed loudly amidst the dangerous silence of the opium houses and sleeping brothels. Growing more and more inside Olivier's ears, the sweet sound of that woman's shoes harmonized the perpetual motion of his wandering.

She opened the parasol that she was carrying hooked onto her forearm, resting it on her shoulder. Little by little her face was revealed from behind the parasol and the curtain of long strands of hair licking her shoulders. Firstly, the brown skin of the cheeks.

Then, the almond-like eyes, the soft nose, the fleshy lips.

However, this face that Olivier observed now, framed by the brown wisps that caressed her bosom, was different from that other one, which had appeared to him at the café. Only the eyes, oblique, ambiguous, that long ago had scrutinized his soul with a strange accuracy, had remained the same.

- It's not the first time it happens... that I'm followed for resembling someone else.

- I didn't mean to say that.

- No man ever says what he thinks - she said, holding Olivier's hands. Despite the coffee he had drunk, he fell asleep.

When he opened his eyes, Olivier was lying by a low wall, on the side of the bay. Across the waters, sparingly lit by the lanterns of the boats, the desolate fisherman villages of Nictheroy slept. Olivier beheld the Fiscal Island, shimmering during the monarchy ball. From within its neo-Gothic arches came the ethereal sound of flutes, muffled once in a while by the laughter and applause of the partakers of the party, bereft of the world.

He laid down on the battlement. The starry sky over the sea flickered indescribably. Perhaps it only resembled, in beauty and in a peculiar kind of sensuality - that kind which only manifests itself when the gaze darkens, the tact sharpens and the world around seems to grow faint - that woman that caressed his face in that moment.

Olivier felt the sweet aroma of the coffee climb up his nostrils. The café was boiling with laughter and voices that night. Only his table rested by the window, dipped in a dark silence. All that noise, all that enthusiasm, all that happiness seemed to expel him from the spot. But he had to wait.

Ele avançou sobre cada veia do pescoço dela, lambeu-lhe os lóbulos das orelhas, penetrou sua língua na boca dela e lá descansou, em meio ao louco turbilhão de lábios e línguas, veias, lóbulos e lágrimas; e lá descansou, imerso num êxtase docemente libertador.

Ela parou de beijá-lo. Suas mãos se interpuuseram entre os corpos.

A flauta doce ressoou novamente. A mulher dirigiu um olhar de uma profundidade desconcertante para Olivier. Suas mãos o impulsionaram sobre a imensidão da sombrias águas. Um longo suspiro transpassou os olhos dela.

'Essas águas negras... esse prédio verde mergulhado na água... invadam-me, beijem-me, afoguem-me, águas verdes... beijem-me com seus lábios salgados... façam-me esquecer-la... deixem-me mergulhar em vocês, ondas negras... levem-me para longe, levem-me para longe e esqueçam-me lá, esqueçam-me e façam-me esquecer os beijos dela... o que é esse negro som que invade as águas, difundindo-se nas ondas?... uma flauta doce?... levem-me para longe, ondas... esqueçam-me dela, por favor...'

- Mate-me, ... . Por favor.

O flautista surgiu ao lado de Olivier.

- Do que o senhor está falando? O senhor está doente? - o doce flautista perguntou, entre um trilo e outro.

- Doente? Um médico não diria o que eu tenho. Um músico, talvez...

- ... ? - o flautista indicou a mulher. Olivier acedeu.

O tocador de flauta doce retomou a velha melodia, amarga, lúgubre, melancólica, vazia.

- Eis a solução para o seu mal. A forma mais direta, mais... - o flautista disse, por fim. Dilacerou seu próprio ventre com a branca flauta doce, agora tingida de sangue.

'Essas gotas... donde vem essa chuva vermelha?... para onde fugiu a canção?... sons, protejam-me dessa chuva vermelha... e esses olhos profundos que me fixam?... eles não piscam?... eles se cobrem de rubras gotas, e não se fecham?... parem de me observar, parem de me perscrutar!... retornem à sua obliquidade típica!... por que vocês olharam dentro da minha alma?... para quê?... tirem-me de seu feitiço vermelho... fechem-se... esqueçam-me... esqueçam-me dela... esqueçam-me dela...'

- Senhor Olivier? O senhor ainda está doente? - perguntou o chinês de olhos ambíguos.

Petrópolis, Nictheroy, 29/III - 18/VI/2003



Facing him, there was an empty chair.

A flute player passed through the street already empty by the late hour. Nobody inside the café heard him, not even Olivier, who saw the man but did not hear the sound.

The café was empty. Only Olivier stayed, immersed in the umbrage.

In that same night, she entered the café, sitting in front of Olivier. She faced those two dark spheres that stared at her, that scrutinized her even through the shade of her eyelids.

Olivier held her hand between his. He seemed to find in that hand, in that chaotic ensemble of bonds, nerves, vessels, blood and tissues, a reason to preserve his own inner chaos, a reason not to solve it the most straight and - painful - way.

- Follow that flute player. You're sick - she said.

The sound of the flute resounded once again in the street. Olivier was able to hear it.

- Does he have the cure for my illness? She looked through the window. A long sigh transposed her eyes.

Suddenly

Olivier ran through the streets and through the thin alleys of downtown Rio. Through the shadows and under the light-post's illumination, he searched for that bitter-sweet and melancholy sound. Until he heard the flute again, breaking the ominous silence of the night. He followed that melody, and reached the Fiscal Island, a green emerald shimmering by the side of the bay.

All sound ceased. Olivier saw men in tailcoats and women in splendid dresses inside the small palace, but they were silent. Walking around the outside of the building, he suddenly encountered a man entangled with her, with that woman that he had seen at the café.

He ventured over each vein of her neck, licked the lobules of her ears, pierced his tongue inside her mouth and there he rested, amidst the mad swirl of lips and lobules, veins, tongues and tears; and there he rested, immersed in a sweetly yielding ecstasy.

She stopped kissing him. Her hands interposed between their bodies.

The flute resounded again. The woman threw a stare of a distressing deepness at Olivier. Her hands impelled him on the immenseness of the shadowy waters. A long sigh transposed her eyes.

'These dark waters... this green building submerged in the water... invade me, kiss me, drown me, green waters... kiss me with your salty lips... make me forget her... let me plunge in you, dark waves... waft me away, waft me away and forget me there, forget me and make me forget her kisses... what is this dark sound that invades the waters, spreading in the waves?... a flute?... waft me away, waves... leave me forgotten of her, please...'

- Kill me... Please.

The flute player rushed to Olivier's side.

- What are you talking about, Mister? Are you ill? - the sweet flute player asked, between a trill and another.

- Ill? A doctor couldn't say what my problem is. A musician, perhaps...

- ...? - the flute player pointed at the woman. Olivier acceded.

The flute player returned to the old tune, lugubrious, bitter, melancholy, empty.

- Here is the cure for your illness. The most direct, the most... - the flute player said, at last. He tore open his own abdomen with the white flute, now dyed blood red.

'These drops... whence comes this red rain?... whereto escaped the tune?... sounds, protect me from this red rain... and these deep eyes that stare at me?... don't they blink?... do they cover up with reddened drops, don't they shut?... stop watching me, stop scrutinizing me!... return to your typical obliqueness!... why did you see inside my soul?... what for?... release me from your red hex... close up... forget me... leave me forgotten by her... leave me forgotten by her...'

- Mister Olivier? Are you still ill? - asked the Chinese with the ambiguous eyes.

# Russian

## Сундук

by Daniel Kharms

*Человек с тонкой шеей забрался в сундук, закрыл за собой крышку и начал задыхаться.*

-- Вот, -- говорил, задыхаясь, человек с тонкой шеей, -- я задыхаюсь в сундуке, потому что у меня тонкая шея. Крышка сундука закрыта и не пускает ко мне воздуха. Я буду задыхаться, но крышку сундука все равно не открою. Постепенно я буду умирать. Я увижу борьбу жизни и смерти. Бой произойдет неестественный, при равных шансах, потому что естественно побеждает смерть, а жизнь, обреченная на смерть, только тщетно борется с врагом, до последней минуты не теряя напрасной надежды. В этой же борьбе, которая произойдет сейчас, жизнь будет знать способ своей победы: для этого жизни надо заставить мои руки открыть крышку сундука. Посмотрим: кто кого? Только вот ужасно пахнет нафталином. Если победит жизнь, я буду вещи в сундуке пересыпать махоркой... Вот началось: я больше не могу дышать. Я погиб, это ясно! Мне уже нет спасения! И ничего возвышенного нет в моей голове. Я задыхаюсь!..

Ой! Что же это такое? Сейчас что-то произошло, но я не могу понять, что именно. Я что-то видел или что-то слышал...

Ой! Опять что-то произошло? Боже мой! Мне нечем дышать. Я, кажется, умираю...

А это еще что такое? Почему я пою? Кажется, у меня болит шея... Но где же сундук? Почему я вижу все, что находится у меня в комнате? Да никак я лежу на полу! А где же сундук?

Человек с тонкой шеей поднялся с пола и посмотрел кругом. Сундука нигде не было. На стульях и кровати лежали вещи, вынутые из сундука, а сундука нигде не было.

Человек с тонкой шеей сказал:

-- Значит, жизнь победила смерть неизвестным для меня способом.

(В черновике приписка: жизнь победила смерть, где именительный падеж, а где винительный).

30 January 1937

## The Chest

translated by Anya Vostrova

A person with a thin neck crawled into a chest, closed the lid and began to suffocate.

Here—uttered, suffocating, the person with the thin neck, -- I am suffocating in a chest because I have a thin neck. The lid of the chest is closed and isn't letting in any air. I will be suffocating, but I won't open the chest's lid anyway. Gradually I will be dying. I will see the fracas between life and death. It will be an unnatural struggle, with equal chances, because obviously death wins, and life, doomed to die, simply struggles with its enemy in vain, not losing useless hope till the last minute. In this same struggle, that will happen now, life will find the way for victory: for this, life needs to force my arms to open the lid of the chest. We'll see: who will win? It smells just horribly of moth-balls in here. If life wins, I'll use tobacco shag... Here, it has begun: I can't breathe anymore. I have perished, this is clear! There is no saving me! And there is nothing sublime in my head. I am suffocating!..

Hey! What's this? Something happened just now, but I can't understand, what exactly. I either saw something or heard something!...

Hey! Again something happened! My God! There's nothing for me to breathe. I am, it seems, dying...

And what is this now? Why am I singing? It seems like, my neck hurts... But where is the chest? Why do I see everything that's in my room? It would appear as if I'm lying on the floor! But where is the chest?

The person with the thin neck got up off the floor and looked around. The chest was nowhere to be found. On the chairs and on the bed were things that were taken out of the chest, and the chest was nowhere to be found.

The person with the thin neck said:

--Then, life won over death in some mysterious way, unfathomable to me.

## Случай с Петраковым

by Daniel Kharms

Вот однажды Петраков хотел спать лечь, да лег мимо кровати. Так он об пол ударился, что лежит на полу и встать не может.

Вот Петраков собрал последние силы и встал на четвереньки. А силы его покинули, и он опять упал на живот и лежит.

Лежал Петраков на полу часов пять. Сначала просто так лежал, а потом заснул.

Сон подкрепил силы Петракова. Он проснулся совершенно здоровым, встал, прошлся по комнате и лег осторожно на кровать. "Ну, -- думает, -- теперь

поплю". А спать-то уже и не хочется. Ворочается Петраков с боку на бок и никак заснуть не может.

Вот, собственно, и все.

### An incident with Petrakov

translated by Anya Vostrova

So, this one time Petrakov wanted to go to sleep, but when he lay down he missed the bed. He landed on the floor so hard that he continued to lie there unable to get up.

So now Petrakov gathered all of his remaining strength and got on his hands and knees. But his strength left him, and he fell flat on his stomach again, and lay there.

Petrakov lay on the floor for five hours or so. At first he just lay there like that, and then went to sleep.

The sleep replenished Petrakov's strength. He awoke completely healthy, stood up, walked around the room and carefully lay down on the bed. "Well," he thinks, "now I'll get some sleep." But now he doesn't really want to sleep. Petrakov is tossing and turning and can't fall asleep at all.

So that's about it.

## Сон

by Daniel Kharms

Калугин заснул и увидел сон, будто он сидит в кустах, а мимо кустов проходит милиционер.

Калугин проснулся, почесал рот и опять заснул, и опять увидел сон, будто он идет мимо кустов, а в кустах притаился и сидит милиционер.

Калугин проснулся, подложил под голову газету, чтобы не мочить слюнями подушку, и опять заснул, и опять увидел сон, будто он сидит в кустах, а мимо кустов проходит милиционер.

Калугин проснулся, переменял газету, лег и заснул опять. Заснул и опять увидел сон, будто он идет мимо кустов, а в кустах сидит милиционер.

Тут Калугин проснулся и решил больше не спать, но моментально заснул и увидел сон, будто он сидит за милиционером, а мимо проходят кусты.

Калугин закричал и заметался в кровати, но проснуться уже не мог.

Калугин спал четыре дня и четыре ночи подряд и на пятый день проснулся таким тощим, что сапоги пришлось подвязывать к ногам веревочкой, чтобы они не сваливались. В булочной, где Калугин всегда покупал пшеничный хлеб, его не узнали и подсунули ему полуржаной. А санитарная комиссия, ходя по квартирам и увидя Калугина, нашла его антисанитарным и никуда не годным и приказала жакту выкинуть Калугина вместе с сором.

Калугина сложили пополам и выкинули его как сор.

22 August 1936

## The Dream

*translated by Anya Vostrova*

Kalugin fell asleep and had a dream, as if he was sitting in some bushes, and a police officer was walking by them.

Kalugin woke up, scratched his mouth and fell asleep again and had a dream again, as if he was walking by some bushes, and a police officer was sitting in them, lurking.

Kalugin woke up, put a newspaper under his head so as not to wet his pillow with drool, and again fell asleep, and again had a dream, as if he was sitting in some bushes, and a police officer was walking by them.

Kalugin woke up, changed the newspaper, lay down and fell asleep again: fell asleep and again had a dream, as if he was walking by some bushes and a police officer was sitting in them.

Now Kalugin woke up and decided not to sleep anymore, but he immediately fell asleep and had a dream, as if he was sitting behind the police officer and the bushes were walking by.

Kalugin started screaming and thrashing around in his bed, but he could no longer wake up.

Kalugin slept for four days and four nights in a row and on the fifth day awoke so emaciated, that he had to tie his boots to his legs with a string, so that they didn't fall off. In the bakery, where Kalugin always bought wheat bread, they didn't recognize him and slipped him rye.

And the sanitation committee, upon checking the apartments and seeing Kalugin, declared him unsanitary and completely useless and ordered the janitors to throw Kalugin out with the trash.

They folded Kalugin in half and threw him out like trash.

1936

# Spanish

## Los Heraldos Negros

by Cesar Vallejo

Hay golpes en la vida, tan fuertes ... ¡Yo no sé!  
Golpes como del odio de Dios; como si ante ellos,  
la resaca de todo lo sufrido  
se empozara en el alma... Yo no sé!

Son pocos; pero son... Abren zanjas oscuras  
en el rostro más fiero y en el lomo más fuerte.  
Serán talvez los potros de bárbaros atilas;  
o los heraldos negros que nos manda la Muerte.

Son las caídas hondas de los Cristos del alma,  
de alguna fe adorable que el Destino blasfema.  
Esos golpes sangrientos son las crepitaciones  
de algún pan que en la puerta del horno se nos quema.

Y el hombre... Pobre... pobre! Vuelve los ojos, como  
cuando por sobre el hombro nos llama una palmada;  
vuelve los ojos locos, y todo lo vivido  
se empoza, como charco de culpa, en la mirada.

Hay golpes en la vida, tan fuertes... Yo no sé!

### Dark Messengers

translated by Celia Bland

There are blows in life so hard -- I don't know! --  
Blows like God's hatred; as if the backwash of  
everything suffered  
were sinking a well into our soul.  
I don't know!

They are few but they exist -- opening ditches  
in the harshest face and hardest back.  
They might be the horses of the barbarous Huns,  
or the dark messengers that death delivers us.

The precipitous falls of the soul's Christ -- some  
adored faith that fate blasphemes,  
those bleeding blows -- the crackling  
of some bread burning at the oven's door.

And man -- poor, poor man!  
Turning his eyes, as  
when a slap on the shoulder stops us,  
his eyes crazy,  
and all of his life wells up  
like a puddle of guilt in that gaze.

There are blows in life so hard -- I don't know!

## Las Joyas del Golpe

by Pedro Lemebel

Ocurrió en un sencillo país colgado de la cordillera, con un balcón con vista al ancho mar. Un país dibujado como una hilacha en el mapa, como una aletargada culebra de sal, que despertó un día con una matraca en la frente, escuchando bandos gangosos que repetían: "Todos los ciudadanos deben guardarse temprano al toque de queda y no exponerse a la mansalva terrorista". Sucedió los primeros meses después del once, en los jolgorios victoriosos del aletazo golpista, cuando los vencidos andaban huyendo y ocultando gente y llevando gente y salvando gente. A una cabeza uniformada se le ocurrió organizar una campaña de donativos para ayudar al gobierno. La idea, seguramente, copiada de "Lo que el viento se llevó" o de algún panfleto fascista, convocaba al pueblo a recuperar las arcas fiscales colaborando con joyas para reconstruir el patrimonio nacional, arrasado por la "farra upelienta", decían las damas rubias en sus té-canastas, organizando rifas y kermeses para ayudar a Augusto, para sacarlo adelante en su heroica gestión. Para demostrarle al mundo entero que el golpe sólo había sido una palmada eléctrica en la nalga de un niño mañoso. El resto eran calumnias del marxismo internacional, que envidiaban a Augusto y a los miembros de la junta, porque supieron ponerse los pantalones y terminar de un guaracazo con esa orgía de rotos. Por eso, si usted apoyó el pronunciamiento militar, vaya pronunciándose con algo, vaya poniéndose con un anillito, con un collar, lo que sea. Vaya donando un prendedor o la alhaja de su abuela, decía la Mimí Barrechea, la emperifollada esposa de un almirante, la promotora más entusiasta con la campaña de regalos en oro y platino que recibía en el Palacio de Bellas Artes, en la gala organizada por las damas de celeste, verde y rosa que corrían como gallinas cluecas recibiendo los obsequios. A cambio, el gobierno militar entregaba una piocha de lata, fabricada en la Casa de Moneda, por la histórica cooperación. Porque con el gasto de tropas y balas, para recuperar la libertad, el país se quedó en la ruina, agregaba la Mimí para convencer a las mujeres ricachas que entregaban sus argollas matrimoniales a cambio de un anillo de cobre, de Chuquicamata, que en poco tiempo les dejaba el dedo verde como un mohoso recuerdo de su patriota generosidad.

En aquella gala estaba toda la prensa, aunque sólo bastaba con "El Mercurio" y Televisión Nacional mostrando a los famosos que hacían cola para entregar el collar de brillantes que la familia guardó por generaciones como cáliz sagrado, le herencia patrimonial que la Mimí Barrenechea recibía emocionada, diciéndoles a sus amigas aristócratas: "Esto es hacer patria, chiquillas". Les gritaba eufórica a las mismas veterrugas de pelo ceniza que la habían acompañado a tocar carcerolas frente a los regimientos, las mismas que la ayudaban en los cócteles de la Escuela Militar, en el Club de la Unión o en la misma casa de la Mimí, juntando la millonaria limosna para el ejército. Por eso, por aquí Consuelo, por acá Pía Ignacia, repiqueteaba la señora Barrenechea llenando las canastillas timbradas con el escudo nacional, y a su paso simpático y paltón caían las zarandajas de oro, platino, rubíes y esmeraldas. Con su conocido humor encopetado pero dicharachero, imitaba a Eva Perón arrancando las joyas de los cuellos de aquellas amigas que no las querían soltar. Ay, Pochy, ¿no te gustó el pronunciamiento? ¿No aplaudías tomando champán el once? Entonces venga para acá ese anillito que a ti se te ve como una verruga en el dedo artrítico. Venga ese collar de perlas, querida, ese mismo que escondes bajo la blusa, Pelusa Larraín, entrégalo a la causa.

Entonces, la Pelusa Larraín picada, tocándose el desnudo cuello, que había perdido el collar finísimo que le gustaba tanto, le contestó a la Mimí: Y tú linda, ¿con qué te vas a poner? La Mimí la miró, descolocada viendo que todos los ojos estaban fijos en ella. Ay, Pelu, es que en el apuro por sacar adelante esta campaña, ¿me vas a creer que se me había olvidado? Entonces da el ejemplo con este valioso prendedor de zafiros, le dijo la Pelusa, arrancándose del escote. Recuerda que la caridad empieza por casa. Y la Mimí Barrenechea vio con horror chispear su enorme zafiro azul, regalo de su abuelita porque hacía juego con sus ojos. Lo vio caer en la canasta de donativos y hasta ahí le duró el ánimo de su voluntarioso nacionalismo. Cayó en depresión, viendo alejarse la cesta con las alhajas, preguntándose por primera vez, ¿qué harán con tantas joyas? ¿A nombre de quien está la cuenta en el banco? ¿Cuándo y dónde sería el remate para rescatar su zafiro? Pero ni siquiera su marido almirante pudo responderle. La miró con dureza, preguntándole si acaso tenía dudas del honor del ejército. El caso fue que la Mimí se quedó con sus dudas, porque nunca hubo cuenta ni cuánto se recaudó en aquella enjoyada colecta de la Reconstrucción Nacional.

Años más tarde, su marido la llevó a Washington por razones de trabajo y fueron invitados a la recepción en la embajada chilena por la recién nombrada embajadora del gobierno militar ante la OEA.

La Mimí, de traje largo y guantes, entró del brazo de su almirante al gran salón lleno de uniformes que relampagueaban con medallas y flecos dorados y condecoraciones tintineando como árboles de Pascua. Entre todo ese brillo de galardones y perchas de oro, lo único que vio fue un relámpago azul en el cogote de la embajadora. Y se quedó tiesa en la escalera de mármol, tironeada por su marido que le decía entre dientes, sonriendo, en voz baja, ¿qué te pasa, tonta? Camina que todos nos están mirando. Mi-za, mi-zafí, mi-zafifi, decía la Mimí tartamuda, mirando el cuello de la embajadora que se acercaba sonriendo a darles la bienvenida. Reacciona, estúpida, qué te pasa, le murmuraba su marido, pellizcándola para que saludara a esa mujer que se veía gloriosa vestida de raso azulino con la diadema temblándole al pescuezo. Mi-za, mi-zafí, mi-zafifi, repetía la Mimí a punto de desmayarse. ¿Qué cosa?, preguntó la embajadora sin entender el balbuceo angustiado de la Mimí, hipnotizada por el brillo de la joya. Es su prendedor, que a mi mujer la ha gustado mucho, le contestó el almirante sacando a la Mimí del apuro. Ah, sí, es precioso, es un obsequio del comandante en jefe que tiene tan buen gusto. Me lo regaló con el dolor de su alma porque es un recuerdo de familia, dijo emocionada la diplomática antes de seguir saludando a los invitados.

La Mimí Barrenechea nunca pudo reponerse de ese shock. Esa noche se lo tomó todo, hasta los conchos de las copas que recogían los mozos. Y su marido, avergonzado, se la tuvo que llevar a la rastra, porque para la Mimí era necesario embriagarse para resistir el dolor. Era urgente curarse como una rota para morderse la lengua y no decir ni una palabra, no hacer ningún comentario, mientras veía -nublados por el alcohol- los resplandores de su perdida joya multiplicando los fulgores del golpe.

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## The Jewels of the Coup

Of Pearls and Scars: radio chronicles  
translated by April Howard

Note: In the coup d'état of September 11, 1973 in Chile, a military junta organized by Augusto Pinochet, amongst other members of the armed forces and the North American CIA, seized power from the populist government of president Salvador Allende, beginning a bloody dictatorship, the power of which lasted into the early nineties, and the resolution of which remains an unsettled issue in modern Chilean society and politics. The 'Declaration' or "Pronunciamiento" is the term by which 'Pinochetistas' refer to the coup d'état, while members of the left and center call it the "golpe" or "coup." This chronicle was written to be read over the radio in the station "Radio Tierra" in Santiago de Chile.

And it happened in a simple country hung from the mountain range with a view of the broad ocean. A country drawn on the map like a loose piece of thread; a startled salt snake that woke one morning with a rattle in her face, to hear the broadcasts repeating nasally: "All citizens must retire by the curfew, and not expose themselves to terrorist treachery." It happened in the first few months after the eleventh, in the victorious carousing of the military cuff, when the conquered were escaping and hiding people and carrying off people and saving people. Some uniformed head came up with the idea of organizing a collection campaign to help the government. The idea, no doubt copied from "Gone with the Wind" or some Nazi pamphlet, summoned the people to collaborate by contributing jewelry to replenish the fiscal coffers and rebuild the national patrimony, demolished by the upelian spree, said the blond women at their tea and canasta parties, organizing raffles and benefits to help Augusto, to support him in his heroic endeavor. To show the whole world that the coup had been only a little electric pat on the butt of a spoiled child. The rest was calumny from the international Marxists, who envied Augusto and the members of the junta, who knew how to wear the pants and crack the whip to end that orgy of madmen. So, if you supported the Military Declaration, then declare yourself with something. A little ring, a necklace, whatever. Donate a brooch, or your grandmother's diamonds, said Mimi Barrenechea, the gaudy wife of an admiral and the most enthusiastic promoter of the campaign of gold and platinum trinkets, who hosted the gala organized by the ladies in pink, green and sky blue who ran around receiving the presents like clucking hens.

In exchange, the military government compensated them with tin badges made in the Presidential Palace in honor of the historic cooperation. Because, what with the cost of troops and bullets necessary to restore freedom, the country had gone bankrupt, added Mimi in order to convince the rich ladies that they did well to deliver their matrimonial rocks in exchange for copper rings, which in a short time left their fingers green, like the moldy souvenirs of their patriotic generosity.

All the press was at that gala, or rather, "El Mercurio" and the national television, showing the rich and famous as they lined up to hand in the jewel-encrusted necklace that the family had kept for generations like a sacred chalice; the patrimonial heritage that Mimi Barrenechea received excitedly, telling her aristocratic friends: "Now this is patriotism girls!" she shouted euphorically to the same ashen-haired prunes who had gone with her to bang pots and pans in front of the army barracks, the same crowd that had lent a hand at the cocktail parties at the Military Academy, the Union Club or in Mimi's very own house, coming together to raise millions in charity to help the army. So, yoo hoo Consuelo, over here Pía Ignacia, chimed Mrs. Barrenechea, filling the little baskets stamped with the national seal, and the odds and ends of gold, platinum, rubies and emeralds tumbled out before her kindly, snobbish stride. With her familiar tipsy humor, she imitated Eva Perón yanking the jewelry off the necks of those friends who were loathe to let it go. Ay, Pochy, weren't you thrilled by the Pronouncement? Didn't you applaud drinking champagne on the eleventh? Then hand over that little ring that looks like a wart on your arthritic finger. Get over here with that dear pearl necklace, darling, the one that you're hiding in your blouse, Pelusa Larraín, give it over for the cause.

Stung, Pelusa Larraín caressed her naked neck, stripped of the divine necklace that she had loved so much, and answered Mimi: "And you darling? What are you going to put in?" Taken aback, Mimi looked around to see that all eyes were watching her. Ay, Pelu, in the hurry to pull off the campaign, you think that I could forget? Well then, make an example of yourself with that expensive sapphire brooch, Pelusa told her, snatching it from Mimi's lapel. Remember that charity begins at home. And Mimi Barrenechea gazed in horror at the sparkle of her enormous blue sapphire, a gift from her grandma because it matched her eyes. She watched it fall in the basket of donations, and up to that point and no further lasted her voluntary nationalism. She fell depressed as she watched the basket wander away with the gems, asking herself for the first time, what would they do with so much jewelry? In whose name was the bank account? Where and when would the auction be, so she could rescue her sapphire? But not even her husband, the admiral, could answer her; he watched her sternly, asking if by chance she had doubts about the honor of the army. And so Mimi was left with her doubts, because there never was an accounting for or recovery of that bejeweled collection for the National Reconstruction.

Years later, when her husband took her to the U.S. on a business trip, and they were invited to the reception at the Chilean embassy for the recently named military government's *embajadora* to the United Nations, Mimi, in a floor-length gown and gloves, entered on the arm of her admiral to the great room full of uniforms shining with medals, gold flecks and decorations clinking like Christmas trees. Amongst all the glitter of the gold chevrons and coat racks, the only thing she saw was a blue gleam on the scruff of the neck of the *embajadora*. And there she stood, frozen on the marble staircase while her husband tugged at her sleeve muttering between his teeth, smiling, under his breath: what's the matter, silly, keep walking, everyone's looking at us. My-sa, my-saphi, my-saphi, stuttered Mimi, hypnotized by the flashing stone on the neck of the smiling *embajadora* who stepped forward to welcome them.

Say something, Stupid, what are you doing, murmured her husband, pinching her so that she would greet the woman who looked glorious dressed in azure satin with the diadem trembling at her gullet. My-sa, my-saphi, my-saphi, Mimi babbled, almost fainting. What's that? The *embajadora* didn't understand. It's your brooch, my wife admires it very much, answered the admiral, saving Mimi from embarrassment. Ah, yes, it's precious. It's a little gift from the Commander-in-Chief, who has such good taste, it really pained him to give it to me because it's a family heirloom, said the deeply moved diplomat before returning to greet the guests.

Mimi Barrenechea never could recover from the shock, and that night she drank everything, down to the backwash in the glasses that the waiters were collecting. And her husband, mortified, had to drag her away, because Mimi found it necessary to intoxicate herself in order to escape the pain. It was urgent to become as smashed as possible in order to bite her tongue, to say not even one word, not to make a single comment, while she watched, clouded by the alcohol, the splendors of her lost jewel multiplying the stars of the coup d'état.

## Comiendo una naranja

by Sara Carnochan

"las palabras me parecieron de piedra, sólo que de una piedra fluida y cristalina"

—Elena Garro, *La culpa es de los Tlaxcaltecas*

papá ¿por qué el sol no hierve el mar?  
sentada en los hombros  
tobillos en las manos de mi nacimiento  
los pies en calcetines rosados  
El mundo recuerda

Perdóname Octavio,  
Envolví mi quesadilla en tu poesía  
Gracias Octavio,  
Tu poesía envolvió mi quesadilla perfectamente

perdóname Los Angeles perdóname Oxford perdóname Cork  
perdóname Nueva York perdóname Oaxaca perdóname Berlín  
(perdónenme los nombres extraños, ¿cuáles son?)

nombres sin rostros, rostros sin nombres  
nombres como heridas, nombres como alegría

mamá ¿por qué no puedo cambiarme cada día  
como la luna con su cara de velas quemadas?  
sentada en las rodillas, las uñas imperfectas  
Borrar mis pesadillas,  
El mundo se arregla

La piedra del mar; suave sin origen  
Dando vueltas en las olas  
en la arena  
para siempre  
nunca dejada nunca tranquila  
las piedras de la luna caen en el mar  
convirtiéndose en luces de tres barcos  
pescando en la soledad

trenzando el cabello de mi hermana  
a las tres de la madrugada  
el alma cambia  
somos las mismas



deseando amor; deseando los hombros  
pies, manos, párpados, uñas, ojos.  
perdóname Amor perdóname Poesía perdóname Mar  
(¿quién eres? sin identidad sin género sin rostro)  
soy una huérfana sin tus caricias  
hablo la lengua del agua  
soy la niña ahogada en el pozo  
en la vida  
respiro el agua pura de los nombres:  
Octavio Juan Gabriel  
Jaime Pablo Carlos Elena  
nunca sentiré la soledad  
con sus palabras en mi boca  
los recuerdos de la lengua

apenas nací y ya regresaré  
a los edificios de vidrio  
llena de ojos vacíos  
regresaré, sin duda a un mundo blanco  
Negro gris

Aprendiste esto:  
Exige estrellas cada noche  
Exige aguacates verdes y suaves  
Exige una flor detrás de la oreja

Perdóname Octavio,  
Envolví mi quesadilla en tu poesía  
Gracias Octavio,  
Tu poesía envolvió mi quesadilla perfectamente caminando  
sola el sol hila un hilo de oro  
cortando las uñas la noche recuerda su juventud  
cepillando los dientes,  
acariciando tu cara,  
comiendo una naranja,  
el mundo cambia

*inicio de la estación aguada*

## Eating an Orange

by Sara Carnochan

"words seem to be of stone, but a stone fluid and transparent"  
--Elena Garro, *The Tlaxcaltecs Are to Blame*

Father, why doesn't the sun boil the ocean?  
sitting on shoulders  
ankles in the hands of my birth  
feet in pink socks,  
The world remembers

Forgive me Octavio,  
I wrapped my quesadilla in your poetry  
Thank you Octavio,  
Your poetry wrapped my quesadilla perfectly

forgive me Los Angeles forgive me Oxford forgive me Cork  
forgive me New York forgive me Oaxaca forgive me Berlin  
(foreign names, forgive me; which are they?)

names without faces, faces without names  
names like wounds, names like joy

Mother, why can't I change each day  
like the moon with its face of burnt candles?  
sitting among knees, imperfect fingernails  
To erase my nightmares,  
The world arranges itself

The stone of the sea, smooth without origin  
Turning in the waves  
in the sand  
always  
never left, never calm  
the stones from the moon fall into the sea  
changing into the lights of three boats  
fishing in solitude

braiding my sister's hair  
at three in the morning  
the soul changes  
we are the same

desiring love; desiring shoulders  
Feet, hands, eyelids, fingernails, eyes

forgive me Love forgive me Poetry forgive me Sea  
(who are you? Without identity, without gender, without a face)  
without your touch I am an orphan  
I speak the language of the water  
I am the girl drowning in the well in life  
breathing pure water of names  
Octavio Juan Gabriel  
Jaime Pablo Carlos Elena  
I will never feel alone  
with their words in my mouth  
the memories of the tongue

I have barely been born and already I will return  
to the buildings of glass  
filled with vacant eyes  
I will return, without doubt to the world of white  
black  
grey  
You learned this:  
demand stars every night  
demand avocados green and smooth  
demand a flower behind your ear

Forgive me Octavio,  
I wrapped my quesadilla in your poetry  
Thank you Octavio,  
Your poetry wrapped my quesadilla perfectly  
walking alone, the sun spins a thread of gold  
cutting her fingernails the night remembers her youth  
brushing her teeth  
touching your face  
eating an orange  
the world changes

*start of the season of water*

## Las moscas by Alison Forbes

En una sala donde se sirven tortillas de queso, pan tostado, jugo de guayaba, fuentes de col y naranjas, hay moscas. El clima es así. Donde hay comida, seguro que va a aparecer una cantidad de bichos, con y sin alas. Esto lo sabemos. No hay ninguna sorpresa ahora que llevamos más de tres meses desayunando en el mismo sitio. Conocemos a los camareros como conocemos los bichos. Sin embargo, seguimos quejándonos. Nos sentamos todos los días como si nunca hubiéramos desayunado en aquel lugar. Siempre es igual. A veces hay comentarios sobre las hormigas, a veces cambiamos el tema un poco y nos fijamos sólo en las moscas.

La segunda queja sin duda viene después de pedir. La tercera cuando nos traen los jugos. La cuarta cuando algunos se dan cuenta del sabor del jugo. La quinta sucede al probar los huevos. La sexta cuando el pan es duro. La séptima cuando no hay suficiente pan. La octava cuando uno se entera de los bichos de nuevo. La novena cuando se acaba la mermelada. La décima con la cantidad y el tiempo del café. La undécima con el bicho ahogado en el azúcar. La duodécima con la última comprensión de la semana que siempre están presentes los bichos en el desayuno.

Nos quedamos un rato para hablar. A veces sentimos orgullo de nosotros mismos por haber tenido las experiencias que hemos tenido. Hablamos de nuestros encuentros con el *socialismo* y de cómo presenciamos eventos verdaderamente cubanos. Nos ponemos de acuerdo que la paciencia es un rasgo clave si se va a sobrevivir el sistema. Lo decimos y lo creemos aunque no somos capaces de sentarnos cinco minutos sin aplastar el aire.

Nos sentimos hábiles por haber conocido (en algo) y por haber interpretado (en algo) la vida de aquí. Nos reímos de la falta de sentido de las cosas. Nos reímos de las contradicciones. De vez en cuando nos ponemos pensativos cuando los bichos toman un descanso e intentamos solucionar todo lo que no nos parece bien. Discutimos la tolerancia sin discutir a nosotros mismos. Nos quejamos de nuevo; sin embargo, esta vez no de los insectos, sino de lo difícil que es aclimatarse. Queremos que nos acepten, pero no nos dejan. Ésta es la queja de hoy y la de la semana pasada.

Sabíamos que hace tres meses había bichos mientras desayunábamos. Estaban hace un mes. Estaban la semana pasada. Estaban hace dos días. Estaban el miércoles. Estaban hoy y estarán mañana. Y supuestamente, estarán la semana que viene como estarán el día que decidamos que nunca jamás desayunaremos en una isla.

La culpa es nuestra por no conocer mejor a Cuba. No es culpa del pueblo cubano porque no nos deja entrar en lo que queda de su revolución. Somos igualmente responsables por estas barreras, las que nos hacen dudar por qué estamos desayunando aquí en primer lugar. Sin embargo, no es culpa de las barreras tampoco. Somos nosotros los que nos hemos detenido. Ellos han seguido. No hay petróleo, siguen andando. No hay carne, siguen comiendo arroz. No hay luz, siguen leyendo en la calle. No hay agua, siguen bañándose en el mar. No hay medicina, siguen rezando. No hay dinero, siguen riéndose. No hay carta para pedir desayuno, siguen fijándose en la lucha, no en las moscas.

## Flies

by Alison Forbes

In a room where cheese omelets, toast, guava juice, oranges, and platters of cabbage are served, there are flies. And that's that. Where there's food, it's inevitable that bugs, with and without wings, will appear. We know this. There aren't any great surprises now that we've had breakfast in the exact same place for over three months. We recognize the flies as we do the waiters, but we still complain. Every day we sit down as if we had never eaten breakfast here before and every day, it's the same. Sometimes we discuss the ants while other times we fixate solely on the flies.

The second complaint of the morning is raised after we order. The third comes when the juice is served. The fourth upon realizing the flavor of the juice. The fifth happens while trying the eggs. The sixth when the bread is officially deemed hard. The seventh when there is not enough bread. The eighth when we notice the bugs all over again. The ninth when we run out of jam. The tenth is prompted by the quantity and temperature of the coffee. The eleventh with the discovery of the drowned bug in the sugar bowl. And the twelfth with the ultimate realization of the week, that flies are always present at breakfast.

We stay awhile at the table to talk. Sometimes we are proud of ourselves for having experienced all that we have. We speak about our encounters with *el socialismo* and how we have witnessed real life Cuban events. We agree that patience is essential for surviving within the system. We say it and we believe it, even though we are not capable of sitting five minutes without swatting the air.

We feel accomplished for knowing this way of life and then we laugh about how it doesn't make much sense. We laugh about the contradictions. When the flies take a break, we sometimes even turn pensive and try to find solutions for everything that seems wrong. Without ever mentioning ourselves, we discuss tolerance and its importance. We complain all over again; but this time it's not the insects, but rather ourselves and our inability to acclimate. We want to be accepted and feel more invested, but they won't permit it. This is the grand complaint of today and of last week.

Two months ago, there were bugs while we ate. They were there last week. They were there last Wednesday too. They were there yesterday and they will be there tomorrow. And most likely, they will be there next week as they will be there the day we decide that we'll never again have breakfast on an island.

It's our fault that we don't know Cuba better. It's not their fault that we're unable to take part in what remains of their revolution. We are equally responsible for these barriers; those that are making us doubt why we came here to eat in the first place. However, the barriers are not entirely to blame either. We prohibit ourselves while they continue. When there is no gasoline, they walk. When there is no beef, they eat rice. When there is no electricity, they read in the street. When there is no water, they bathe in the sea. When there is no medicine, they pray. When there is no money, they laugh. When there is no menu for ordering breakfast, they focus on the fight, not the flies.

## un sábado por la mañana

by Alison Forbes

Fuera del edificio 107 en la calle dieciséis, del reparto Miramar, en el municipio Playa, en la ciudad de La Habana, llueve. Las gotas que caen del cielo blanco no son tan gordas que las puedo oír desde mi cama; sin embargo, son suficientemente gruesas para mojar la ropa que colgamos afuera para secar. Myda, la mujer que nos ayuda a cuidar el piso, dice que hoy, a las tres de la tarde, viene un frente frío y que debemos planear ir a la playa otro día. Después de decírmelo, sigue viendo las noticias que salen por el televisor.

Tres niños palestinos fueron asesinados ayer.

Cinco personas murieron en una tormenta en el estado de Ohio.

Hay suficiente petróleo para cien años en la reserva de Irak.

Ni Francia ni China apoya a los Estados Unidos en su declaración de guerra.

Myda no deja de hablar de las injusticias del mundo. Sigue hablando en voz alta aunque se queda sola en la sala de estar. De información, ella sabe muchas cosas. Del mundo, no conoce casi nada. En Santiago nació y en La Habana trabaja seis días a la semana. Así es. No habla de sitios donde ha estado ni de lugares adonde quisiera ir. Habla de los políticos cochinos y de lo que se vende en el agro-mercado que queda en la calle al lado.

Con el televisor siempre resonando en algún fondo, pasa sus días fregando el suelo y fumando el tabaco más fuerte de la isla. Mientras la veo a ella y la monotonía de sus días, pienso en los álbumes que debe tener y en lo que hay encima de sus estantes. Pienso en las colecciones de cosas que ha adquirido a lo largo de su vida--en las conchas robadas por ella cuando era más joven de una playa en el oeste--en las florecitas de plástico que le fueron regaladas por unas vecinas la noche de su cumpleaños - y en las postales pegadas a su pared de estatuas ecuestres y fuentes de algunos parques centrales.

Ahora que las plantas están regadas y acaba de fumar su séptimo cigarrillo de la mañana, apaga el televisor y las noticias de hoy. Sabe que hay niños que se siguen muriendo y que no va a haber bastante comida en todas las partes del mundo, incluso la suya, pero no hablamos mas de ello hasta mañana, cuando los suelos estén sucios de nuevo.

un sábado por la noche

En La Habana, en el municipio Playa, del reparto Miramar, en la calle dieciséis, fuera del Edificio 107, sigue lloviendo. Sin embargo, ahora las gotas son enormes y caen más fuerte que antes. Hace mucho tiempo que no conozco el día sin conocer su sol.

Anocheció hace mucho ya. Me quito el vestido rosa que me había puesto cuando pensaba en el chico que me gusta demasiado.

un domingo

Lo llamé pensando que tal vez quisiera compartir conmigo el viento que trajo la lluvia de ayer. No estaba.

un domingo por la noche

Le conté de las olas angustiadas cuando nos sentamos a comer dos bolas de chocolate cada uno. Mientras yo pensaba en cómo se decía la palabra *inundar*, me dijo cómo le hubiera gustado conocer el malecón y sus dolores a mi lado.