

# Learning to Howl

Selected poems of Maria Beneyto

Translated by Paul Scott Derrick

Introduction by Candelas Gala



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**Maria  
Beneyto**  
Espectora  
de l'any 2025



**LEARNING TO HOWL**  
**SELECTED POEMS OF MARIA BENEYTO**

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Paul Scott Derrick

with an Introduction by Candelas Gala



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## ILLUSTRATIONS

- Els impacients de la fi*, Alexia Such Hidalgo  
*Cançó de l'aigua enflorida*, Daila Bucchieri  
*La presó de nit*, Aitana Tinoco Castillo  
*Prec per a assolir la paraula*, Romina Marcela Carate Tortajada  
*Recerca*, Romina Marcela Carate Tortajada  
*El record*, Clara Fontanet Tortajada  
*L'engany*, Clara Fontanet Tortajada  
*Sirena*, Arantxa García Martínez  
*Acostament a l'amic amarg*, Arantxa García Martínez  
*Veu per a un fill nonat*, Selma Guerrero Luna  
*Ombres*, Selma Guerrero Luna  
*Vidre ferit de sang*, Emma Niclós Llopis  
*La dama bova*, Mario López Mayordomo  
*Albat*, Mario López Mayordomo  
*Més enllà del capvespre*, Arantxa García Martínez  
*L'estrany*, Mario López Mayordomo  
*Ciutat bombardejada*, Emma Niclós Llopis  
*L'àngel darrer*, Enrique Hernández Caravaca  
*Desde la boira amb corbs*, Patricia Niclós Llopis  
*Després de soterrada la tendresa*, Emma Niclós Llopis  
*La veu glaçada de la solitud*, Patricia Niclós Llopis  
*Entre parets perduda*, Patricia Niclós Llopis  
*Sense tu*, María Payá Escobar  
*La casa*, Alexia Such Hidalgo  
*Véns*, Héctor Sierra Valverde  
*Presència*, Enrique Hernández Caravaca  
*Vell solitari*, Selma Guerrero Luna  
*Animàlia*, Sara Pedroche Pastor  
*Nívia i fotògraf*, Alexia Such Hidalgo  
*Bressoleig a l'insomni de la ira*, Romina Marcela Carate Tortajada  
*L'insecte*, Clara Fontanet Tortajada  
*Prec*, Aitana Tinoco Castillo  
*Ara cal viure*, María Payá Escobar  
*El que tu ets*, Aitana Tinoco Castillo  
*Aprenent a udolar*, Enrique Hernández Caravaca

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION, CANDELAS GALA .....	17
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### **ALTRA VEU (1952)**

#### **ANOTHER VOICE**

<i>Els impacients de la fi</i> .....	30
Those Impatient for the End .....	31
<i>Cançó de l'aigua enfollida</i> .....	34
Song of the Raging Water .....	35
<i>L'insecte roig</i> .....	36
The Red Insect.....	37
<i>La presó de nit</i> .....	40
Prison at Night .....	41
<i>Arbres en la ciutat</i> .....	42
Trees in the City.....	43

### **RATLLES A L'AIRE (1956)**

#### **LINES IN THE AIR**

<i>Prec per assolir la paraula</i> .....	50
A Prayer to Attain the Word .....	51
<i>Cançoneta en el camp</i> .....	52
Song in the Field .....	53
<i>Recerca</i> .....	56
Research .....	57
<i>Deliberadament roses</i> .....	58
Deliberately, Roses .....	59
<i>El record</i> .....	64
Remembrance .....	65

<i>Preu al revers</i> .....	68
The Hidden Price .....	69
<i>L'engany</i> .....	74
The Deception .....	75
<i>Sirena</i> .....	78
Mermaid .....	79
<i>Acostament a l'amic amarg</i> .....	82
Address to the Bitter Friend .....	83
<i>Hereus</i> .....	86
Heirs.....	87
<i>Veu per a un fill nonat</i> .....	90
Voice for An Unborn Son .....	91

**VIDRE FERIT DE SANG (1977)**

**BLOOD-WOUNDED GLASS**

<i>Ombres</i> .....	98
Shadows .....	99
<i>Vidre ferit de sang</i> .....	102
Blood-Wounded Glass.....	103
<i>La dama bova</i> .....	106
Lady Nitwit .....	107
<i>Terra</i> .....	112
My Land .....	113

**DESPRÉS DE SOTERRADA LA TENDRESA (1993)**

**AFTER THE BURIAL OF TENDERNESS**

<i>Albat</i> .....	122
The Dead Infant .....	123
<i>Més enllà del capvespre</i> .....	126
Beyond the Sunset.....	127

<i>L'estrany</i> .....	130
The Stranger.....	131
<i>Ciutat bombardejada</i> .....	134
Bombed City.....	135
<i>L'àngel darrer</i> .....	140
The Last Angel.....	141
<i>Una dona i un home en l'alta nit</i> .....	144
A Woman and a Man in the Middle of the Night.....	145
<i>Des de la boira, amb corbs</i> .....	152
In the Fog, with Ravens.....	153
<i>Després de soterrada la tendresa</i> .....	162
After the Burial of Tenderness.....	163

**ELEGIES DE PEDRA TRENCADISSA (1997)**

**ELEGIES OF BRITTLE STONE**

<i>La veu glaçada de la solitud</i> .....	178
The Frozen Voice of Solitude.....	179
<i>Cercant culpable</i> .....	180
Searching for a Culprit.....	181
<i>Entre parets perduda</i> .....	184
Lost Between Walls.....	185
<i>Sense tu</i> .....	190
Without You.....	191
<i>La casa</i> .....	194
The House.....	195
<i>Vens</i> .....	200
You Come.....	201
<i>Presència</i> .....	204
Presence.....	205
<i>Vell solitary</i> .....	210
Lonely Old Man.....	211

<i>La vella dona del vell gos</i> .....	212
The Old Dog's Old Woman .....	213
<i>Animàlia</i> .....	218
Animalia.....	219
<i>Xiquet que tira pedres</i> .....	222
The Boy Who Throws Stones.....	223
<i>La parella</i> .....	226
The Couple .....	227
<i>Núvia i fotògraf</i> .....	230
Bride and Photographer .....	231

**BRESSOLEIG A L'INSOMNI DE LA IRA (2003)**  
**ROCKING THE INSOMNIA OF ANGER**

<i>Bressoleig a l'insomni de la ira</i> .....	236
Rocking the Insomnia of Anger.....	237
<i>L'insecte</i> .....	240
The Insect .....	241
<i>Prec</i> .....	244
Plea.....	245
<i>Ara cal viure</i> .....	250
Now It's Time to Live .....	251
<i>La flor nonada</i> .....	252
The Unborn Flower.....	253
<i>La ira que es mossega la cua</i> .....	254
The Anger that Bites its Tail .....	255
<i>El que tu ets</i> .....	258
What You Are .....	259
<i>Aprenent a udolar</i> .....	262
Learning to Howl.....	263

## INTRODUCTION

*Candelas Gala*

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The present English translation of forty-nine poems from the extensive and varied poetic production of Maria Beneyto (València, 1920-2011) opens the works of this notable poet to a wider readership. This obvious and important benefit is not the only one this selection offers, for there is also the historical and social background it surveys. The selection includes poems from the decades of the fifties, moving through the seventies and nineties, and reaching the year 2003. The dates of these poems correspond to the postwar years after the Spanish Civil War of 1936-1939 and the transition from Francoist dictatorship to Parliamentary democracy in 1975, including more contemporaneous years when advanced age didn't derail the poet's writing. Beneyto lived and experienced the war throughout her teenage years and early youth, and the sense of alienation felt during the postwar period by those who like her family supported the losing side during the war, left an imprint in her writings. Her later poems reflect a poetic speaker who has witnessed many world changes to the point of feeling like an «Other» vis-à-vis her surroundings.

If the previous observations will attract readers interested in the historical aspect of poetry writing, those wishing to get a deeper sense of Beneyto as woman and poet and immerse themselves in the texture of the poetic text will also find fertile ground in this selection. For these poems speak of a woman and of the complexities and contradictions in her inner self and her role in the outside world; and they also speak of a woman poet deeply involved in meta-poetic concerns that never lose sight of the human female being that she was.

The most striking facet of this woman poet is a deep experience of self-division marked by the distance between the truth sponsored by officialdom and what she knows to be true within herself. At an existential

level, there is the life/death dichotomy, a reality that she understands rationally as complementary poles while experiencing, at the same time, the wall of death as a betrayal perpetrated against life. These polarities keep at bay whatever expression of fullness, because to indulge on one side of the binomial would betray the truth of the other. This realization reaches a point where, confronting cultural models of completion, she must admit that she is not only failing to replicate the model, but deceiving it altogether. How could she ever approximate the model woman portrayed in *Proverbs* 31: 10-31? But how could any woman for that matter? The distance between the features of the good wife in the Bible and expectations in contemporary times are such that one must take the poet's «deception» with more than a grain of humor. Whatever irony we may detect or even imagine in the poet's «deception» doesn't diminish its critical denunciation of standards in the Western world, particularly those applying to women, still largely functioning according to patriarchal Judeo-Christian beliefs.

Rather than those lofty, but unfair, anachronistic, and unrealistic ideals, Beneyto focuses on people's struggle as they draw near the end of their lives. Old women, in particular, live their declining years like sunlight at the end of the day, by being relegated to corners, with «still born» words to which no one pays heed, reduced to being «piles of ashes waiting». Their lives have already been consumed and their ashes only wait for burial: the glass wall of death is closing in on them.

The poet's own age approximates her experience to that of those «old women of the sunset» and to an increasing sense that a betrayal has been perpetrated on life itself. The war took away years from her life, and from the lives of so many women who like her mother found themselves confined to caring for home and children with none or limited means, while losing their men in battle. The war also took away the life of the country, reducing the land to rags, and to an oppressive and censorial regime that turned people into specters, completing a scenario of *consumatum est*. The style of this woman is not to «dress up life through the wound», or to make life shine despite the wound and suffering. She is a woman made of flesh traversed by the wounds of furrows in the earth, her sister.

Nevertheless, it is in the unfathomable death of a child where the betrayal against life is deeply felt. The poet finds no justification for such

death and, although she never had a biological child, her unborn son is a presence that accompanied her since her childhood, both united in facing circumstances set on curtailing their right to live. Death is the overall betrayal against life because it erects two walls to trap life in between, the wall already surging right at birth and the one shutting up at death. Like the *ouroboros* or serpent biting its own tail, the proximity of life and death is such that the poet resorts to something that may be considered counter inductive or counter traditional, which is to engage in conversing with ghosts and specters, and in looking for traces left behind after life has passed by. This highly unusual take on the poet's part could be interpreted as a way to counteract the «official», highly polished version of horrific events during the war and its aftermath, a way to dig deeper into what was purposefully buried from the public. Her commitment to this pursuit is such that she feels «betrothed» with all the children of the shadows she is set to rescue from oblivion. This acute sense of the liminality of living is in great part a source of the political and poetic tension and power of Beneyto's writing.

The title of her 1952 book *Another Voice* is suggestive of changes having been made in her writing to accommodate the times when «the fangs of silence» took over lives and expression during Francoist Spain. It is telling that a poem in the selection from this book deals with the «raging song» of water. Traditionally associated with the mirror of contemplation in the prototypical Narcissus scene, here the water mirror is far from returning a faithful reflection because troubled by rage, it cracks. The reflection of an imposed version of the 'real', just as the strictures of the regime dictated, is directly shattered.

Writing becomes *Lines in the Air*—the title of her 1956 book—that the poet dispenses like a prayer in the hopes that they will attain the poetic word itself. But her voice has too many embers from too much sorrow, because it is a voice that echoes the «furrow of the wounded earth». Like the earth of her country, her voice has been creased by the war bombings and by the later repression, and like the earth, her voice struggles between «seeds and roots», or the enthusiasm for life to grow and expand, and the temptation to regress into protection deep in the rooted earth. As poems reveal, she often adopts an in-between option or chooses for her voice to remain in the shadows, in an opaque but sub-

versive zone. The option might have been different had freedom allowed her to be «the voice of the countryside».

Having lived through the euphoric period of speed and mechanization in cities, the poet has experienced the betrayal of life in a depleted Nature. From her window she could see tree branches entangled with electric wires and men who, like those García Lorca denounced in his *Poet in New York*, rush to mechanical jobs devoid of creativity. Their humanity is diminished by their «limiting», «stinging» and rootless lifestyles. City people are «strangers» because they do not know what solidarity means. Although they spend many hours at their jobs, their hands are useless because they have no connection with what they produce, having been reduced to cogs in a big mechanical system. If survival comes in the image of a «blood ox», are we to be condemned to castration and to a life like a draft animal? The ox performs work in silence, which Beneyto quotes from *Hamlet's* line «And the rest is silence». She is also echoing García Lorca's character Bernarda Alba, whose dictatorial ruling over her five daughters is framed by the opening and closing word of the drama play *The House of Bernarda Alba*. The word is none other than «¡Silence!».

While García Lorca perceived skyscrapers as ominous presences whose many glass windows isolated workers from the environment, Beneyto describes skyscrapers as «novices» that will never be «ordained» to reach the sky they so much «scrape». The city programs are antithetical to life and antithetical to solidarity among people. But, like the poet, Earth doesn't remain silent. As the title of the poem «Beyond the Sunset» suggests, the Earth demands a voice that will speak from beyond the limits of the day and of life, claiming a voice for what is buried. Throughout her writings, Beneyto has probed the traces that life leaves behind in the passage of time, returning to memories, remembrances, and photographs to recover moments and strands from lives that are no longer. Nature's response is quick, coming with the unstoppable capacity of insects to live and reproduce despite the most adverse circumstances, and nature's «opening bloom» in its ongoing cycle of life, brings to light the voices of the buried.

The betrayal against life becomes a matter of poetic concern when it has a direct effect on how to address a loved one, such as a suffering friend. An illness affecting someone close and the bitterness it brings

marks the author's metapoetic reflections regarding how to counteract the falsity of language platitudes. The poet faces a situation where a new, different language is needed, a language consisting of the «hidden word» each thing has in order to be named truthfully. That «hidden word» is at the antipodes of used, trite language and it is hidden because it demands a search for the truth about such a horrific illness to be revealed; the extreme situation of the friend won't accept any clichés. If those hidden words are not to be found, the poet will have to give her friend something «without a name», something language-less or free from the need of words, of signs whose nature as signifiers is to separate from the designated thing or signified. The «embers» of her language may be the most truthful way to address the friend's state and, by extension, the country's. Those embers may be of words that are slowly fading, but they still hold the possibility of reviving the true emotions that they contain.

Working with language's tendency to become murky and stereotypical involves a continuous struggle to preserve true meaning against the erosion caused by excessive use and the passage of time. It is a temptation to fall for the «pruned, cut-out words» that sound pretty but fail to convey truth, and when the air lacks freedom, the voice becomes «knotted». The 'textile' texture of the written text is blocked from flowing freely because of sociopolitical maneuverings, censorship, and entrenched poetic traditions, which twist the threads until they imprison and mute the voice.

Solitude and alienation also infringe on expression and even cause fear about inhabiting a house of language (as Fredric Jameson called it). How could the poet make use of a language system that splits her in two, one part living, speaking, and writing on the side of external, outward reality, and the other conversing with shadows and the proximity of the wall of death? The split-self finds solace in quoting other writers, finding in their works a sort of protective niche, not so much to avoid or escape reality, but to dialogue with their various, different ways of dealing with the same existential split.

Water in «Song of the Raging Water»—which I commented upon from her youthful book *Another Voice*—will eventually have to follow its natural flow, as Heraclitus declared with the flux of everything and the poet Jorge Manrique noted with the river ending in the sea of death. But

this won't be water flowing calmly; it will resound with Dylan Thomas' «Do not go gentle into that good night, [...] Rage, rage against the dying of the light.».

The roses that so persistently insist on growing from the interstices of the urban concrete slabs may be all «full of themselves» as prototypical symbols of poetry and beauty, and not to be trusted because their beauty is empty when considering the dismal surroundings. However, roses don't give up and keep on growing. They would seem to be telling the poet to follow John Keats' message that: «Beauty is truth, truth beauty,—that is all / Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know» («Ode to a Grecian Urn»). After all, had not Gertrude Stein already carried out a great deal of probing when in her 1913 Poem «Sacred Family» she wrote: «Rose is a rose is a rose is a rose»?

The medieval poet Ausiàs March lends Beneyto an epigraph about writing to friends regarding her sadness and grief. Her wish would be to return to a place of joy where she could live wild and free, but she lacks the ships to get there. Ships, a well-known image for poems, resonate with Rimbaud's *Le Bateau ivre* [The Drunken Boat] and are here provided with «hypothetical mirrors», referring to the multiplicity and potential trickery that those ships/poems could contain. A witch—a possible figure of a powerful female in March's works—has no reservations about embarking in those ships/poems, but the poet refuses because she senses they will lead her to the limits of «the mesh of wounded anxieties, sickly disorders, and cursed flesh». She must stop that line of writing because she cannot sacrifice her «vice of living. This evil vice».

Split between roots and seeds, the inner and outer worlds, darkness and light, she would be echoing not only Edgar Allan Poe's ominous Raven, but also the battle between the raven and the rose in Drosselmeyer's story «The Prince and the Raven». Even with the Prince's victory for the rose in that story, what stays with this poet is that the battle between raven and rose will continue forever. Beneyto's compatriot, Felip Melià Bernabeu (1898-1973), forced into exile after the war, touched a similar hopeful chord when he titled his 1931 play «Encara queda sol en la torreta» [«The sun still shines on the turret»]. Beneyto might have found solace in that title when she included it in her poem «After the Burial of Tenderness». Echoing this most human need to believe that things will

get better, and thanks to the flowing circuits of intertextuality, Longfellow's name came to our translator's decision to render «Encara queda sol en la torreta» into «Behind the clouds the sun still shines». This minor alteration of line 12 of Longfellow's «The Rainy Day» states, as with the raven and the rose, that pain and solace will continue their ongoing balance. Amid this familiarity among writers, the betrayal against life in the case of Virginia, Poe's young wife who died at the age of 24, won't be reduced to oblivion when the trace she left on her husband's life and writings is well-documented.

«Learning To Howl» is the very appropriate, very apt title Paul Scott Derrick, the translator, has chosen for this selection, because «howling» is the response demanded for the betrayal perpetrated against life. And the «accomplice» in learning how to howl will be no other than a dog, a street-wise, flea-bitten, hungry dog with a human name, Sara. Dog and human come together in a sort of middle ground between nature and culture, articulate and inarticulate language. In their exchange of glances, it is Sara who hears «the murmur of the voice that speaks sorrows, worries and sometimes—a very few—phrases of a drowsy, feeble, sleepwalking joy». It is also Sara who will teach the poet how to howl. What they each need to express can't be conveyed in the language which so anthropocentrically humans have proudly declared as the feature attesting to their superiority over the non-human world. The long, doleful cry of the howl will convey the lack both Sara and the poet cannot fill: Sara for the abuse and neglect she and so many like her have suffered and will continue to suffer at the hands of humans, and the poet, for «the constant, living loss of myself, of the waning being that carries me».

Learning «how to howl» is learning how to address the betrayal committed against life, not only by external, sociopolitical and historical circumstances, but by word and language travesties, and essentially, by the impenetrable wall of death.



# **LEARNING TO HOWL**



*ALTRA VEU*  
**ANOTHER VOICE**

1952





*Els impacients de la fi*  
Alexia Such Hidalgo

## ELS IMPACIENTS DE LA FI

La llum us va fugir  
i la penombra  
ha vingut a buscar-vos els matins més calents  
dins la maledicció, la gran sofrença.  
Les torxes que fereixen l'alta nit  
reflecteixen encara  
envoltades d'un somni. Anells de ferro.  
Els ulls endarrerits  
volien trobar mans, potser paraules,  
motius de romanir, belles mentides.  
No hi ha res.  
Els ullals del silenci us posaren  
astorant de molt prop  
en medusa letal milers de caps  
i pels ponts perillosos del ponent  
passà el vostre rosari de dies en la pluja.  
A un sol indret de la foscúria  
on una allau de corbs, tots a l'aguait, restava,  
anàreu.  
Ningú no sabrà si ara sou el xiscle perdut  
morint-se novament en els morts de la terra,  
si en l'ombra del temps inestroncable  
esteu tornant a nàixer.

## THOSE IMPATIENT FOR THE END

The light has gone away from you  
And the formless shadow  
has come to seek you on the hottest mornings  
within the curse, the great suffering.  
The torches that wound the night  
glimmer still  
surrounded by a dream. Iron rings.  
Your eyes looking back  
wanted to find hands, maybe words,  
reasons to stay, beautiful lies.  
There's nothing.  
The fangs of silence  
startled you  
a lethal medusa coming close  
thousands of heads  
and over the dangerous bridges of the West  
your rosary of days passed by in the rain.  
You went  
to a single place in the darkness  
where an avalanche of watching crows was waiting.  
No one will know if you are now the lost scream  
dying again among the dead of the earth,  
or if, in the shadow of inextricable time,  
you are being born again.





*Cançó de l'aigua enfolida*  
Daila Bucchieri

## CANÇÓ DE L'AIGUA ENFOLLIDA

Van a veure en l'aigua el feréstec de l'aigua.  
Van i venen.  
La lluna fon decrepit anell que sols sabia  
amagar-se o desfer-se.  
Anaven nens a veure-ho.  
Semblant branques  
totes teses,  
bèsties llargues.  
Herbes  
ja, cabelleres  
desnuades.  
Que la boca del mar era immensa  
de l'apetit de riu  
i el cor fatídic, nu, de l'aigua  
destrenà en braços freds foc i caliu.  
(Escultors de fang brut i de terrors  
per desordre de nius.)  
Quallava ombres quietes,  
alta, alta,  
plena i vella de sempre.  
Per la clivella de l'espill trencat  
la mort feia el camí del llimac tendre...

Van a veure en l'aigua el feréstec de l'aigua.  
Van i venen.

## SONG OF THE RAGING WATER

In the water they see the wildness of the water.  
They come and go.  
The moon was a worn-out ring that only knew  
how to hide or dissolve itself.  
Children went to see it.  
Looking like branches  
Standing on end,  
long beasts.  
Already  
grass, uncovered  
hair.  
The mouth of the sea was immense  
with the hunger of the river  
and the naked, fateful heart of the water  
unleashed fire and heat in frigid arms.  
(Sculptors of dirty clay and terrors  
for disordered nests.)  
It curdled still shadows,  
high, high,  
full and old as always.  
Through the crack in the broken mirror,  
death walked the path of the tender slug...

In the water they see the wildness of the water.  
They come and go.

## L'INSECTE ROIG

Com poder dir-ho  
només amb paraules,  
amb les meues paraules que palpegen el buit,  
que no, no podran mai  
tancar la llum viscuda?  
No és el fet, sinó la flamarada,  
l'enlluernament  
del teu roig lluir al sol, insecte.  
Tan a penes res, i tant en un moment per a mi  
aqueix moviment de robí teu!  
Passarà el camp,  
i els pins, i aquest aire,  
i el vol harmoniós d'ocells i papallones,  
i aquesta pau de l'home que va tirant de l'ase  
(animal i home que viuen sens saber-ho,  
amb la inconscient virtut que tens també)  
però sols el teu pas tan feliç, tan esplèndid,  
tan ple tot de potències magnífiques i obertes,  
sols aqueixa flameta del teu roig existir  
—a penes un sol dia—  
vindrà sobre les teues ales mínimes  
seguint-me  
omplint-me el pas de tu quan jo me'n vaja.  
Ton flamejar d'un moment  
gegant en tornaveu de segles,  
tot foll de sol i d'alegria verge.

## THE RED INSECT

How can I say it  
with only words,  
with my words that try to touch the void,  
that will never be able  
to close the light now lived?  
It isn't the fact, but the flame,  
the dazzle  
of your red shining in the sun, insect.  
Such a tiny thing, and so much for me in a moment  
this ruby movement of yours!  
The field will pass,  
and the pines, and this air,  
and the harmonious flight of birds and butterflies,  
and the peace of the man who pulls the donkey  
(animal and man who live not knowing it,  
with the unconscious virtue you also have)  
but only your happy step, so splendid,  
so full of magnificent, open powers,  
only that little flame of your red existence  
—barely a single day—  
will come on your minute wings  
and follow me  
filling my steps with yourself when I'm gone.  
Your flaming of a giant moment  
gave me back echoes of centuries,  
all full of sun and virgin joy.





*La presó de nit*  
Aitana Tinoco Castillo

## LA PRESÓ DE NIT

Per damunt d'aprenents gratacels  
ha passat un àngel.  
Quina tristor roman als arbres buits,  
mancats de banderins vegetals d'alleluia,  
els arbres sense fulles, nus de vida  
en l'abrupta ciutat!  
La cèlica presència  
cobreix tota la casa  
on hòmens plens de límits  
—alguns marcats pel signe de Caïn en els braços—  
enyoren a les fosques  
un Déu que potser siga  
el que la mare deia en l'hora de la por,  
quan el silenci amenaçava l'ordre  
perfecte de la música agressiva  
i éssers nocturns vinguts fins a la febre  
donaven la raó sempre al desori...  
Ombra d'ales  
per damunt d'ells, els hòmens  
que ni viuen ni són,  
els que somien a la mar de nit,  
els que no tenen pau.

Pel bell mig silenciós nocturn,  
fugaç com l'estel,  
un àngel passa.

## PRISON AT NIGHT

An angel has passed above  
novice skyscrapers.  
What sadness remains in the empty trees,  
devoid of verdant pennants of praise,  
the leafless trees, knot of life  
in the bustling city!  
A celestial presence  
covers the whole building  
where men full of limits,  
—some with the sign of Cain on their arms—  
long in the dark for  
a God who may be  
what their mothers invoked in the hour of fear,  
when silence threatened the perfect order  
of aggressive music  
and nocturnal beings rising into fever  
always sided with disorder...  
Shadow of wings  
above them, men  
who neither live nor are,  
those who dream of the sea at night,  
and have no peace.

In the midst of the silent night,  
fleeting as a star,  
an angel passes.

## ARBRES EN LA CIUTAT

Sucre parat  
per damunt dels grans arbres.  
Promesa que se'n va, desfilada i trencada.  
El verd, el florir  
fugitiu del verd en la ciutat,  
com un escàs intent, retallant a gaies.  
Refugi dels ocells  
i les dones surants de la boira.  
Coberta d'ombra imaginada, viva  
des de l'agror del recordar primer.  
Benedicció de branques  
afalagant el pas  
i la febre, i la pressa,  
i la pols esmolada pel dur tacte  
que arriba desgastant-nos, llimant-nos  
la vida,  
aquesta vida on el fum hereta  
la missió de retallar els somnis  
que fan brostar uns arbres  
folls de música aèria.

La cridada als boscs  
va empalliant suaus banderes  
entre alts fils elèctrics  
i astorament de les parets porugues.  
(Sols ells, els que han nascut de sobte,  
ho veuen.)  
Un eixam de petites aus perdudes  
amb fines plomes pàl·lides d'aire

## TREES IN THE CITY

Sugar sprinkled  
on the lofty trees.  
A passing promise, frayed and broken.  
Green, the fugitive  
blooming of green in the city,  
like a timid attempt, cutting off snippets.  
A refuge for birds  
and women floating in the fog.  
Covered with imagined shadows, alive  
since the earliest bitter memories.  
A blessing of branches  
flatters the walk  
and the fever, and the haste,  
and the dust sharpened by the heavy touch  
that wears us down and rasps  
our lives,  
lives in which smoke inherits  
the task of trimming those dreams  
that make trees burgeon  
mad with aerial music.

The call of the woods  
drapes soft banners  
among high electric wires  
and fearful, astonished walls.  
(Only those who have been born suddenly  
can see it.)  
A flock of lost little birds  
with fine feathers, pale as the air,

assenyalen la senda que se'ns ha oblidat,  
i passem sens mirar la gran troballa,  
girant la nostra espatla foscament  
al caminal de llum que recercàvem.

Vaig recollint ombres de menta  
per a omplir els cabells aquests, frenètics,  
que criden

la pluja pressentida  
amb el que tenen d'herba.

I el record enfonsat en les pupil·les  
tacades de verdor d'arbres remots  
ve a protegir la líquida alegria  
en rel·lucar de fulles, tendror nova  
de l'amor vegetal aquest, beatífic...

Ah, la cridada als boscs!

Infants de pluja endarrerida venen  
a fer la gran anunciació de l'aigua.  
Colomes de la pau inconeguda  
esclaten

i s'envolen de sobte, fugisseres  
surant des de les verdes avingudes  
cap al mar, cap al somni o cap al dia.

shows us the way we have forgotten,  
and we walk without seeing the great discovery,  
darkly turning our backs  
to the path of light we were seeking.

I'm gathering shadows of mint  
to fill this frantic hair  
that shouts  
at the rain foretold  
by the grass it contains.  
And the memories submerged within the green-stained  
pupils of distant trees  
come back to protect the liquid joy  
on the glimmering leaves, a new tenderness  
of this beatific vegetal love...

Ah, the call of the woods!  
Children of the belated rain come  
to make the glorious announcement of water.  
Doves of the unknown peace  
burst forth  
and suddenly take wing,  
floating away from these green avenues  
toward the sea, toward the dream or the dawning.



***RATLLES A L'AIRE***  
**LINES IN THE AIR**  
1956





*Prec per a assolir la paraula*  
Romina Marcela Carate Tortajada

## PREC PER A ASSOLIR LA PARAULA

Massa tristor, Senyor, massa pes em donares,  
massa foc, massa brasa, en donar-me la veu.  
Aquesta veu de solc de la terra ferida,  
aquesta veu, en lluita de llavors i de rels.

Massa tristor, Senyor, és la veu feta d'ombres,  
amb gèrmens de mots íntims, com fills que no han de ser.  
Massa tristor la veu, cremant l'alé i el llavi,  
sortint d'un cor d'incendi per a morir al gel...

Déu! Llàgrima que plore, font de llum que em fa cega,  
escolta'm el clam últim, ja mai més cridaré.  
La meua veu sols clama per la paraula viva,  
per la paraula nua, per la paraula on Ets.

## A PRAYER TO ATTAIN THE WORD

Too much sorrow, Lord, you gave me too much weight,  
too much fire, too many embers when you gave me my voice.  
This voice echoing the furrow of the wounded earth,  
this voice, a struggle of seeds and roots.

Too sad, Lord, is this voice made of shadows,  
with germs of intimate words, like children who should not be.  
Too sad this voice, burning my breath and lip,  
Emerging from a heart of fire to die in the ice...

God! The tears that I weep, source of light that blinds me,  
listen to my final cry, I will never cry again.  
My voice cries out only for the living word,  
for the naked word, for the word where You are.

## CANÇONETA EN EL CAMP

Me n'aniré.  
Tot quedarà el mateix.  
Altres vindran.  
Per les meues petjades petjaran...  
Estic mentint.  
Jo he de romandre ací.  
No vull ser llamp,  
vull ser aire, ser llum, ser veu del camp.  
Déu de l'amor,  
no soc tota jo l'orb?  
La claredat  
em respon que la mort no és veritat.

## SONG IN THE FIELD

I'll go.  
It will all remain the same.  
Others will come.  
They'll follow in my footsteps...  
It's a lie.  
I have to stay here.  
I don't want to be lightning,  
I want to be air, light, the voice of the countryside.  
God of love,  
am not I all of the globe?  
Morning clarity  
answers me that death is not true.





*Recerca*  
Romina Marcela Carate Tortajada

## RECERCA

Caldria anar amb peus de neu, petits,  
a saludar l'íntacte de l'aurora.

A deixar-li la pau dels rams més tendres  
caldria anar amb passos fets de flor.

(Després, derrocar arbres plens de nius  
per a les creus de mort, per als incendis.  
I remoure al fosc cec tristors pregones  
esbrinant bé després què és un ocell.)

Caldria que a la set d'un cigne blanc  
refrescàsem les tèbies alegries.

Caldria recercar els capolls tímids  
per al gran desdejuni del matí.

(Després, tornar al fum. Desfer sorolls  
per als infants que avui han de morir-se.  
Després, girar-se a Déu i preguntar-li  
per aqueixes angúnies innocents.)

Caldria anar, curant de no ser vent,  
on les plomes voldrien formar ales.

Caldria anar al túnel de les brises  
a cercar les maragdes envoltants.

(Després, alçar les mans, aquestes, brutes,  
interrogant per què, per què. Clamant.  
Després, cridar fins a quedar-se tous  
deixant a Déu el buit. A ses paraules.)

## RESEARCH

We should go with feet of snow, little ones,  
to greet the flawless dawn.  
We should go with steps made of flowers  
to leave it the peace of the tenderest bouquets.

(Then, cut down trees full of nests  
for the crosses of the dead, for the fires.  
And stir sad shouts into the blinded darkness  
to find out later what a bird is.)

We should slake with tepid joys  
the thirst of a white swan.

We should search for shy cocoons  
for the abundant breakfast of the morning.

(Then, breathe in the smoke. Pour out noises  
for the children who will die today.  
Then, turn to God and ask Him  
about their innocent anguish.)

We should go, careful not to be the wind,  
where feathers would like to form wings.  
We should go to the tunnel of the breezes  
to look for surrounding emeralds.

(Then, raise our hands, these dirty hands,  
asking why, why. Crying out.  
Then, shout until we have no voice,  
leaving God in the void. To his words.)

## DELIBERADAMENT, ROSES

Suaus davant del sol, rodonament suaus,  
del sòl meu de la vida estan sorgint.  
Són les roses de sempre  
que jo no coneixia  
amb aquesta suprema veritat  
propera,  
que ara posseesc.  
Roses que entre les cúspides del més rònc taulell  
se somriuen, tan clares, a l'orella de l'aire,  
plenes de si mateixes,  
tan agressives delicadament,  
i làngüides, senceres...

Va venir en la llum un cant amb plomes  
desfent-se tot festiu, tot ell quedant-se  
en les ribes més altes de l'estiu.  
I en l'arbre havia, pàllid, un record  
d'aèries petjades  
impossibles,  
llunyanes, imperfectes.  
(Ai, ales que vingueren  
per núvols-caminals de llum angèlica  
voretant-me la porta  
junt a la voravia ciutadana!)

Però les roses són veritats buides,  
que solament podrien  
esguardar sense ulls tota bellesa.

DELIBERATELY, ROSES

Soft beneath the sun, round and soft,  
they emerge from the soil of my life.  
The everyday roses  
that I did not know  
with this supreme, familiar  
truth  
I now possess.  
Roses that smile between the edges  
of deserted concrete slabs,  
so clear, in the ear of the air,  
so full of themselves,  
so delicately aggressive  
and languid, whole...

A feathered song came into the light,  
playfully unraveling itself, to remain  
on the highest shores of summer.  
And in the tree, there was a pallid memory  
of impossible,  
distant, imperfect  
footprints in the air.  
(Oh wings that came through  
cloud-paths of angelic light  
encircling my door  
next to the city sidewalk!)

But roses are empty truths;  
they could only see  
all of beauty without eyes.

I a mi el tacte perpetu d'aquestes veus vol dir-me  
al seu constant anell,  
que mai no he de poder escapar de les roses  
crescudes en el vent miraculós,  
mentre s'escolte el clàxon i el llarg riure  
de la serra mecànica,  
tan esglaiosa, i cínica, i senzilla!

Jo desitge fugir (o no ho desitge?)  
d'aquesta allau insípida dels pètals  
amb les flairors ja còmplices de l'ombra,  
afalacs cecs i febles en la llum.

I altra vegada esguarde que les roses  
se me'n venen a l'ànima, i les plore  
en aqueixos nous vents de la dona que em porta  
—dona i no àngel— per la voravia.

And the perpetual touch of these voices  
constantly surrounding me wants to say  
that I will never escape from the roses  
grown in the miraculous wind,  
while the sounds of the horn and the lingering  
laughter of the chain saw, so frightening and cynical  
and simple, are in my ears!

I want to run away (or don't I?)  
from this insipid avalanche of petals  
with their fragrance complicit in shadows,  
blind and feeble flattery in the light.

And again I contemplate the roses  
that have grown into my soul, and I weep for them  
in these new winds of the woman who carries me  
—a woman, not an angel—next to the sidewalk.





*El record*  
Clara Fontanet Tortajada

## EL RECORD

I torna l'alegria,  
subreptícia, reptant-me.  
¡Traïdorament torna!

Ningú no podrà endur-se  
el que tinc, el que oculte,  
el que és ja sols de l'ànima.

Si la tristor, de sobte  
ennurolà collites,  
no va a ferir blat tendre.

No va a ferir blat tendre,  
ni a despullar rosella.  
Blat i flor són intactes.

Ara el veig clar al somni,  
eclosió tornada  
sagnant junt a l'espiga...

Pujaré monts feréstecs.  
En el pla seré un arbre.  
Aniré sobre l'aigua.

Tornaran nous desficis.  
Fugirà l'esperança.  
S'estendran vents i núvols.

(Romandrè jo en silenci,  
perquè hi ha hores meues  
que cap de vent no encalça.)

I quan ja estiga a fosques,  
quan no aplegue a mi l'alba,  
tu vindràs. Serà dia.

## RESEMBRANCE

And joy returns,  
surreptitiously, challenging me.  
Treacherously it returns!

No one will take away  
what I have, what I hide,  
what only belongs to my soul.

If sadness suddenly  
clouds the sky over crops,  
it will not hurt the tender wheat.

It will not hurt the tender wheat,  
nor strip the poppy plant.  
Wheat and flower remain unscathed.

Now I see it clearly in my dream,  
hatching turned bloody  
beside the stem...

I will climb wild mountains.  
On the plain, I'll be a tree.  
I will walk on the water.

New challenges will come.  
Hope will flee.  
Winds and clouds will spread.

(I'll stay silent  
because I have my hours  
when no wind blows.)

And when it's dark,  
when the dawn doesn't come to me,  
you will approach. It will then be day.

Podré fer fugir l'ombra,  
rescabalar els pètals,  
i del blat fer niuada.

Vindràs llum, fresca, nova.  
I reviurà a la brisa  
tot el camp on soc terra.

I can make the shadows run away,  
gather up petals,  
and make a nest of the wheat.

Light, you will come, fresh and new.  
And the breeze will bring back life  
to this whole field where I am the earth.

## PREU AL REVERS

Havia de plorar aqueixes alegries.  
Era just.

I les plore.

Ja sabia a trenc d'alba, ja sabia  
que res mai no podria aturar cada nit  
successiva, que sempre tornaria.

I no em queixe. Ni cride.  
Ni alce el clam perquè em muden  
com a mercaderia que a mi no em convingués,  
aquest preu amagat (al revers sempre).  
Cal pagar tot sovint d'un mode viu  
amb la vida en carn viva, aqueix raig tendre  
a penes presentit, vora el gran somni.

Vingué la claredat apareguda  
plena de goig intacte en núvol verge.  
Vaig poder allargar-me, tocar llum,  
que arribava propera...

Sols tinguí prou en veure enlluernada  
la visió vinguda,  
i no seria just que junt al preu  
no donara les gràcies com faig ara.

Amb aquest mut dolor, Déu de l'estepa,  
jo et beneïx encara per ésser herba viva  
on la llum es deté abans d'ésser nit.

Però ja estic en pau. En pau amb tots.  
Ja he posat la moneda del meu preu  
damunt del pes, i és l'equilibri exacte.  
Res no em deuen ni jo dec res. Soc lliure.

## THE HIDDEN PRICE

I had to mourn those joys.  
It was fair.  
And I mourn them.

I already knew at the break of dawn, I already knew  
that nothing could ever stop each successive  
night, that it would always come back.

And I don't complain. Nor shout.  
Nor raise a cry because I'm being moved  
like merchandise that didn't suit me,  
this hidden price (always on the other side).  
So often you have to pay with your life  
vividly, in the living flesh, that tender ray  
barely felt, close to the great dream.

The clarity that came was  
full of pristine joy in a virgin cloud.  
I could reach out and touch the light  
coming closer...

Enough to see the oncoming vision  
with dazzled eyes,  
and it wouldn't be fair, if along with the price  
I didn't give thanks, as I do now.

With this mute pain, God of the steppe,  
I bless you still for being living grass  
where the light fades away before the fall of night.

But I'm at peace. At peace with everyone.  
I've already put the coins of my price  
on the scale, and the balance is exact.  
They owe me nothing, and I owe them nothing. I'm free.

He pagat.

He pagat fins l'oreig i el petit raig de lluna.

Soc solvent.

He pagat.

I have paid.

I have paid to the hilt and the tiniest ray of the moon.

I'm solvent now.

I have paid.





*L'engany*  
Clara Fontanet Tortajada

## L'ENGANY

Jo soc la dona forta de la Santa Escriptura.  
(Mai no hi hagué més feble, més humil criatura.)

Mai no hi hagué un silenci més compacte que el meu  
tancant els camins vívids a més crescuda veu.

Els em motegen freda, i serena, i valenta.  
I estic plena de pànic i de tristor calenta.

Els són sens rels pregones, i sens força i sens pau.  
Els són el covard sempre, el dolent, o l'esclau.

Els són els vents aqueixos que ajuden tota flama,  
ells folls, els gots de l'ombra, la veu tensa que clama.

I jo no sé quin núvol equivocat i estrany  
posà en mi l'aigua aquesta, de font que no em pertany.

Però mai no vaig dir-los: «Companys, també soc terra.  
De flama soc i d'aigua, d'elements sempre en guerra...»

No els diguí la por meua a la nit, a la mort.  
Prop de mi, no sabia que estic morint-me, el fort...

No és l'estil meu, sabeu-ho, lluir per la ferida  
la vida.

## THE DECEPTION

I'm the strong woman of the Holy Scriptures.<sup>1</sup>  
(There was never a weaker, more humble creature.)

There was never a solider silence than mine,  
closing vivid paths to louder line.

They call me quiet, and brave, and cold.  
And I'm full of hot sadness and panic untold.

They have no strength, nor peace, nor roots deep as a cave.  
They are always the coward, the wicked, or the slave.

They are the winds that feed every flame,  
the cups of the shadow, the fools, the voice that cries out, strained.

And I don't know what cloud, mistaken and strange,  
filled me with water from a source I cannot claim.

But I never told them: «Comrades, I am also earth.  
And flame and water, elements always at war from birth...»

I didn't tell them my fear of the night and of death.  
Close to me, the strong, you'd never know I'm taking  
[my dying breath...

It's not my style, you know, to dress up life  
through the wound.

<sup>1</sup> Reference to Proverbs 31: 10-31.





*Sirena*  
Arantxa García Martínez

## SIRENA

Ara vinc a la mar, junt al misteri.  
Ara que ja és la platja nua i tendra  
meua només, sense terrestres passos.  
(La mar reconeixent-me com a filla...)

Dient mar a la mar, jo li dic mare  
sense llavis ni veu, i estenc els braços  
a l'aire fronterer en el silenci  
del món que ja no és meu, clos al deliri.

Dona de carn ací, dona de terra.  
Ai, ciutats de corall i flors marines,  
món de l'aigua perdut sens reencontre,  
companyes fluvials, no retrobades!

Ací estic. Escolteu-me. Ja soc sola.  
Vinc una altra vegada plena d'ecos  
a dir-vos la paraula... Ja soc sola.  
Ja no obrirà mai més porta l'exili?

Si poguéssiu saber-ho! Al pleniluni  
tot és mar dins de mi, tot marinada,  
tremolant en les venes on sou vida.  
Mar cridant i cantant, plorant, creixent-me.

I a la líquida porta està el silenci.  
Murs vivents per a mi d'aigua tancada.  
Ja no puc tornar més. On sou, amigues?  
On és la flor dels vostres cants nascuda?

Soc criatura d'aigua en l'enyorança  
i a penes tinc de mar els ulls i els somnis.  
Germanes mudes ja sota les ones,  
soc sola ací, sola en la mar per sempre...?

## MERMAID

Now I come to the sea, close to the mystery.  
Now that the beach is tender and bare  
and mine alone, with no earthly footsteps.  
(The sea recognizes me as a daughter...)

Naming the sea the sea, I call it mother  
with neither lips nor voice, and I stretch out my arms  
to the bordering air in the silence  
of the world that is no longer mine, closed in delirium.

A woman of flesh here, a woman of the land.  
Oh cities of coral and flowers of the sea,  
that world of water lost without return,  
river companions, never to be seen again!

Here I am. Listen to me. Now I'm alone.  
I come again, full of echoes,  
to whisper the word... Now I'm alone.  
Will this exile never open the door again?

If only you could know! When the moon is full,  
everything inside of me is sea, all sea,  
trembling in the veins where you are life.  
Screaming and singing sea, crying, making me grow.

And there is silence at the liquid door.  
Living walls of water closed to me.  
I cannot bear this anymore. Where are you, my friends?  
Where is the flower of your songs given birth?

I am a creature of water, yearning,  
and I can hardly keep my eyes and dreams from the sea.  
Silent sisters now beneath the waves,  
am I here alone, alone in the sea forever...?





*Acostament a l'amic amarg*  
Arantxa García Martínez

## ACOSTAMENT A L'AMIC AMARG

Si ara jo pogués anomenar-te les coses  
amb el mot amagat que cada cosa tinga,  
tu podries entendre veritats infallibles,  
amic, a qui feresc amb aquesta manyaga.

Amb tu ja no em serveix res meu d'abans i sempre,  
res d'allò que en el crit em va a servir d'ajuda.  
Per a aqueixa ferida en carn viva endenyada,  
són remeis d'altra llum, ja ho sé, els que necessites.

I caldria donar-te quelcom sens nom encara  
que tu no coneguesses com amor compadit.  
Així no sagnaries a pietats temudes  
que t'empelten l'espasa del meu bàlsam amic...

Jo et diguí, te'n recordes?, la veu i aquesta calma  
on el crescut plorar en tendror es destilla.  
El meu ram d'innocència esclatant al teu aire,  
era un piular d'ocells que es donava a l'aurora.

Així de natural i de senzill, sens frase,  
sens espurneig vistós, ni histrionisme fàcil,  
com l'aigua a bocins tèrbola, a bocins contraclara,  
plena d'impuls de llum i allargada energia.

I portant com tota aigua també herbes o peixos,  
ruïnes de collites, pedres i fang al fons,  
amb els íntims cadàvers de formosors llunyanes  
que se m'han mort al somni i sempre van amb mi...

Jo no soc criatura de la gràcia. Soc terra.  
Soc barreig d'albes llums i barreig d'impureses.  
Però en la mà tenia calius nets que donar-te,  
i Déu creuà un moment l'ombra meua tibada.

## ADDRESS TO A BITTER FRIEND

If I could name for you now all things  
with the hidden word that each one has,  
you would understand infallible truths,  
friend that I assault with this affectionate gesture.

With you, nothing I've ever had can help me,  
none of it was a help when I too cried out.  
I know you need remedies from another light  
for that wound in your raw, offended flesh.

And I should give you something without a name,  
even if you don't perceive it as compassionate love.  
Thus you wouldn't bleed from the sympathies you fear,  
grafted onto the sword of my friendly balm...

I told you, remember? The voice and that calm  
where adult tears are distilled in tenderness.  
My bouquet of innocence bursting into your air  
was a chirping of birds at dawn.

As natural and simple as that, without a phrase,  
without any flashy sparkle or easy histrionics,  
like water, murky in some places, clear in others,  
full of the impetus of light and extended energy.

And like all floods it will carry grasses or fish,  
ruins of crops, stones and mud at the bottom,  
with the intimate corpses of distant beauties  
who died in my dreams and always keep me company...

I am not a creature of grace. I am earth.  
I am a mixture of dawning lights and impurities.  
But I held clean embers in my hand to give you,  
and God crossed over my rigid shadow for a moment.

La paraula era jo, tota dissolta i mínima,  
tota carronya i fum, tota de pols futura,  
intentant rels pregones que a la fi em deturassen  
junt a la veu humana dels patiments continus.

Però ara he sabut que fereixen i endenyen  
les imprudents tendrors com menyspreaments enteses.  
Em vestiré de guerra, d'enemic teu de sobte,  
i en veure'm t'ardiran il·lusions de força.

Així, fins a encertar a anomenar-te les coses  
amb el mot extingit que cada cosa tinga.  
(Cara a llavors, els raïms de paraules larvades  
germinaran de nit per a nàixer a l'alba...)

Sí, amic, fins a fer-te subtil enginyeria  
amb veritats de ferro on l'amistat camine,  
faré un mur a l'impuls, solament a les nafres  
t'acostaré un silenci de dolçor infinita.

I was the word, dissolved and minimal,  
all carrion and smoke, all future dust,  
trying to find deep roots that finally stopped me  
along with the human voice of continual suffering.

But now I know that they hurt and infect  
imprudent tenderness interpreted as contempt.  
I shall dress for battle, as your sudden enemy,  
and when you see me you'll burn with illusions of strength.

And so it will be, till I can name for you all things  
with the extinguished word that each one has.  
(And then, the clusters of larval words  
will germinate at night to be born at dawn...)

Yes, my friend, until I can build you a subtle scaffolding  
with iron truths where friendship walks,  
I shall raise a wall to my impulse, and only bring  
a silence of infinite sweetness to your wounds.

## HEREUS

El meu batec de vida, no aqueix dring de paraules  
retallades, podades, fetes música fàcil.  
Sols el batec, la vida solament per a dir-vos  
que estic viva, dissolta en vèrgens alegries.

Ai, companys meus d'origen, els que viviu en terra,  
quina abraçada meua, o llaç de llum o força  
—d'aqueixa nua i tendra i terrible com l'aigua—  
acoste en el silenci que em tanca i em limita!

Pot ésser que en jorns àcids no sospiteu encara  
aquest lluminós cercle de garlandes i braços.  
Soc voluntat feréstega de romandre dins l'aire,  
i en l'espai d'algun dia ja sabreu que soc vostra.

Ocorrerà de sobte, netament, sens miracle,  
com van ocórrer sempre les més senzilles coses.  
Direu: què és aqueix núvol blanquinós i festívol  
que se'n va per deixar-nos alt i pur el nou dia?

Què és aquest mar blau vívid, amb veus de sol petites  
dient-nos a l'uníson frases mai no escoltades?

Quina llum de sorpresa cerca en flames els arbres  
del camp adust, i acosta les muntanyes perdudes?

O millor, qui és qui abaixa aquest bell ram d'estrelles  
als afores més trists de la ciutat, cridant-nos?

I jo estaré entre Déu i l'alegria  
dient-vos: «Ací estic. Jo soc aquella».

## HEIRS

My heartbeat, not that tinkling of pruned,  
cut-out words made easy music.

Only the heartbeat, life just to tell you  
that I am alive, dissolved in virgin joys.

Oh, my fellow natives, you who live on the earth,  
what embrace of mine, or bond of light or strength  
—naked, tender, and terrible as water—  
approaches in the silence that encloses and limits me!

On bitter days, you may not yet suspect  
this shining circle of garlands and arms.  
I am a wild determination to stay here in the air,  
and in a few more days you will know that I am yours.

It will suddenly happen, cleanly, without a miracle,  
as the simplest things have always occurred.  
You will say: what is that whitish and festive cloud  
that disappears to leave us a new day, high and pure?

What is this bright blue sea, with small sun voices  
telling us in unison words we've never heard before?  
What surprising, flaming light seeks out the trees  
of the arid field, and brings lost mountains closer?

Or better, who is bringing down this beautiful bouquet of stars  
to the saddest outskirts of the city, calling to us?

And I will place myself between God and joy  
and tell you, «Here I am. I'm the one.»





*Veu per a un fill nonat*  
Selma Guerrero Luna

## VEU PER A UN FILL NONAT

Fill meu remot, el no nascut de mare,  
el no arrelat a aquesta carn de dona,  
mai no engendrat, presència no viscuda,  
jo et demane el silenci, jo no et cride...

He nascut massa vella. Vinc de l'ombra  
i ja et portava al si l'ànima meua  
quan la claror em va ferir els passos.  
Vaig vindre amb tu, dual ja per a sempre.

Quin núvol vares ésser en els muscles  
de la infantesa meua no esclatada!  
(Ara et pregunte des de lluny per ella:  
¿es va creuar amb tu, la vares veure?)

El nostre encontre —quan?— fon un misteri.  
Jo somiava els braços de carn teua  
com dues branques de dolçor pregona,  
o com dos istmes de la llum quallada.

Però també et sentia fet cadena  
al meu coll, fet d'amor que asfixiava.  
Et sentia avançar cap al meu viure  
interposat entre les veus dels altres...

I en mi romans, fet mur en l'invisible,  
tancant la meua porta a l'abraçada,  
gelós de l'home que podria dur-te  
des del teu fons, des del llimac a l'aire.  
Ai, fill; ai, mort; ai, ànsia meua viva!  
Què vols de mi, què dius que he de donar-te?  
Quina animàlia ets dins de ma vida  
devorant-me feréstec la tendresa?

## VOICE FOR AN UNBORN SON

My distant son, the son not born of a mother,<sup>2</sup>  
the son not rooted in this woman's flesh,  
never begotten, an unlived presence,  
I ask you to be silent, I do not call out to you...

I was born too old. I come from the shadows  
and I already bore you in the bosom of my soul  
when the light wounded my steps.  
I came with you, coupled forever.

What a cloud you were on the shoulders  
of my unshattered childhood!  
(Now I ask you from afar about my childhood.  
Did it cross paths with you, did you see it?)

Our meeting—when?—was a mystery.  
I dreamt of your arms of flesh  
like two branches of clamoring sweetness  
or two isthmuses of curdled light.  
But I also felt you like a chain  
made of suffocating love around my neck.  
I felt you moving toward my life  
intruding among the voices of others...

And you are still within me, a wall in the invisible,  
closing my door to any embrace,  
jealous of the man who could take you  
from your hiding place, from the slug to the air.  
Oh my son, oh death, oh my living longing!  
What do you want from me, what do you want me to give you?  
What kind of animal are you inside my life,  
ferociously devouring my tenderness?

Allunya't de mi, fill de silenci,  
deixa'm ja sola, sense pes, crescuda.  
Als llimbs d'infants nonats, pot ésser trobes,  
companya i aguardant-te, ma infantesa

Get away from me, son of silence,  
leave me alone, weightless, grown up.  
In the limbo of unborn children, you may find  
my childhood, waiting to be your friend.

<sup>2</sup> Maria Beneyto was a childless woman.



***VIDRE FERIT DE SANG***  
**BLOOD-WOUNDED GLASS**  
1977





*Ombres*  
Selma Guerrero Luna

## OMBRES

Les velles dones del capvespre, criden  
apropant-se feixugues pels cantons  
on l'aire dorm i jeu  
cobert de pols tendríssima.  
Amb els cànters antics  
plens de set, venen.  
Amb les paraules  
nascudes mortes, amb el vidre  
que es trenca al fons dels ulls  
en mil punxes desfetes.

Les velles dones del capvespre arriben  
amb vestits de difunts encara tebis.  
Boques a mig somriure o pedra a mig badar-se,  
ens acomiaden des de lluny.

La cendra  
que són, amuntegada, aguarda.  
Cendra purificada per més foc, la cendra  
per sempre consumida i consumint-se.  
(Boscs remotíssims que es desfan  
sota els dits,  
i la flairor a fum dels arbres jóvens  
penjada pel coll de la nit veïnera.)

Les velles dones del capvespre, mudes,  
ens assenyalen  
a l'aguait, amagades en la llum definitiva  
on no arriben els ulls, on la mà estesa  
és estranger perdut  
colpejant portes closes  
d'una ciutat deserta, clausurada a la veu.

Les velles dones del capvespre.

## SHADOWS

The old women of the sunset shout  
as they clumsily approach the corners  
where the air sleeps and lies  
covered with tender dust.

With ancient pitchers full of thirst,  
they come.

With words  
stillborn, with the glass  
that breaks at the back of the eyes  
into a thousand broken shards.

The old women of the sunset arrive  
in shrouds still warm.

Half-smiling mouths or half-fractured stones  
they say goodbye from afar.

They are piles of ashes  
waiting.

Ashes purified by more fire, ashes  
consumed and being consumed forever.

(Very distant forests that melt  
beneath your fingers,  
and the smell of smoke from young trees  
hanging from the neck of the neighboring night.)

The old women of the sunset, mute,  
point at us  
waiting, hidden in the definitive light  
where eyes do not reach, where the outstretched hand  
is a lost stranger  
knocking on the closed doors  
of a deserted city, eternally closed to the voice.

The old women of the sunset.





*Vidre ferit de sang*  
Emma Niclós Llopis

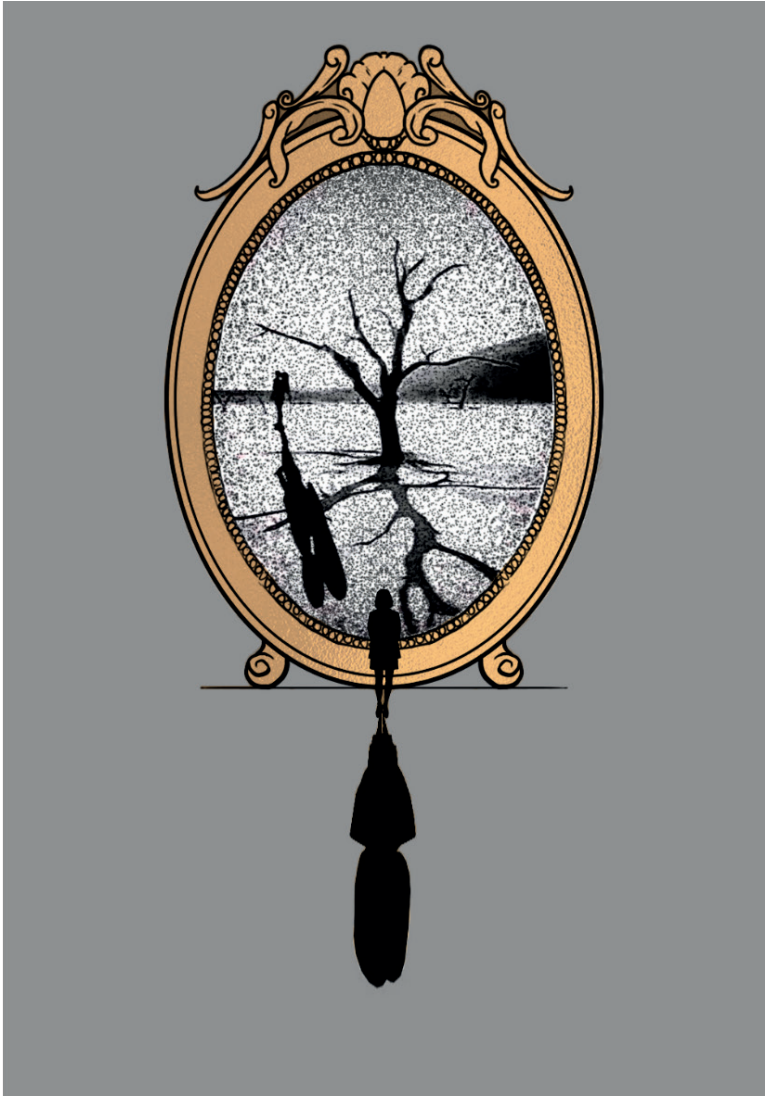
## VIDRE FERIT DE SANG

Tacat de roja ràbia feridora  
feréstega,  
emmetzinat de tèbia agror humana  
jeu, colpejat de mort, d'espessa  
opaca ceguetat maligna.  
Fred innocent que ara  
sap del podrimener, la por, l'antiga  
desesperació,  
vell foc que crida al buit.  
Matèria  
intacta abans,  
amb la ferida  
d'aquestes ungles, dents o ganivets  
que han fet vermella l'ampla llum del món  
—aigua glaçada en pedra  
que l'adormia—  
plora a la gran llàgrima nua  
on era la claror  
retallada,  
i s'esbandeix, trencat, a terra.  
Aleshores, el bou de la sang  
fa camí  
més avall, més amunt  
dels límits imposats,  
força amagada  
que obre porta a la pell  
alliberant la fosca  
ferocitat  
animal i calenta  
de la vida.

## BLOOD-WOUNDED GLASS

Stained with red wounding rage,  
ferocious,  
poisoned with warm, human bitterness,  
it lies, stricken with death, in thick  
opaque malignant blindness.  
The innocent cold that now  
knows all about rottenness, fear,  
the age-old despair,  
ancient fire screaming into the void.  
Matter  
unharmed before,  
with the wound  
of these nails, teeth, or knives  
that have reddened the ample light of the world  
—water frozen into stone  
that put it to sleep—  
sheds naked tears  
where the light was  
cut off,  
and it expands, broken, on the ground.  
Then, the blood ox  
makes its way  
lower, higher  
than the limits imposed,  
a hidden force  
that opens the door to the flesh  
releasing the dark  
ferocity,  
animal and hot,  
of life.





*La dama bova*  
Mario López Mayordomo

## LA DAMA BOVA

Són trenta-nou anys.  
Trenta-nou anys de núvols  
i fum, i boira,  
omplint allò que potser siga vida  
als llimbs de la bava,  
el caminar a tombs,  
la mà que pesa un aire inconegut,  
els ulls que miren  
la ceguesa en la llum  
i els colors més frenètics.  
Trenta-nou anys  
de mare patidora  
amb una filla que no viu,  
ample cadàver  
que té fam i té fred  
i sexe, i llàgrimes.  
La filla  
que seria una gran comoditat,  
veure-la vegetal, quieta,  
florida a la finestra, com un arbre tímid,  
però que porta  
calenta sang sota la pell,  
i de vegades troba l'home i furta  
el seu viure animal  
un resquill fugitiu de claredat daurada,  
emmetzinada i tèrbola.  
Trenta-nou anys.

LADY NITWIT<sup>3</sup>

It's been thirty-nine years.<sup>4</sup>  
Thirty-nine years of clouds  
and smoke, and fog,  
filling what may be life  
in the limbo of drool,  
stumbling around,  
the hand that weighs an unknown air,  
eyes that look  
at blindness in the light  
and the most frenetic colors.  
Thirty-nine years  
of a suffering mother  
with a daughter who's not alive,  
a large corpse,  
hungry and cold  
with sex and tears.  
The daughter  
who should be a great comfort,  
see her there, vegetal, still,  
blooming in the window like a timid tree,  
but with warm blood  
under her skin,  
and sometimes she finds the man and steals  
his animal life  
a fleeting sliver of golden light,  
poisoned and murky.  
Thirty-nine years.

I al fons  
la misèria de segles anunciant-la.  
Generacions de fam,  
de mans, de veus  
demanant, reclamant. Insuficiència  
de pa, justícia, llibertat.  
Resum  
d'una raça que mor,  
llum esgotada,  
amb el monstre, tancant la porta,  
fent-se  
conseqüència.  
Final del tercer acte.  
I què fer?  
¿No té remei el caminar a tombs,  
la mà que pesa l'aire,  
els ulls que miren  
tots els colors del món al mateix temps  
movent-se,  
i l'amenaça per damunt del cap  
—no sap com ni per què—  
que és la segura  
i única veritat que entén i espera?  
Trenta-nou anys i encara amb una mare  
que prefigura el que no és  
i sembla  
posar d'ella mateixa al buit  
allò  
que no hi ha en aquell cos de nina absurda.  
Trenta-nou anys. La dona  
va nàixer d'un esglai,

And in the background  
the misery of centuries announcing it.  
Generations of hunger,  
of hands, of voices  
asking, clamoring. Insufficiency  
of bread, justice, freedom.  
Summary  
of a dying race,  
fading light,  
with the monster, closing the door,  
becoming  
a consequence.  
End of the third act.  
And what to do?  
Is there no remedy for the stumbling step,  
the hand that weighs the air,  
eyes that look at  
all the colors of the world  
moving at once,  
and the threat above her head  
—she does not know how or why—  
which is the real  
and the only truth that she understands and expects?  
Thirty-nine years old  
and still with a mother  
who foreshadows what she is not  
and seems  
to thrust into the void  
that part of herself  
that isn't contained in her absurd body of a doll.  
Thirty-nine years. The woman  
was born of fear,

amb la por per ambient  
i tots els clams per música de fons.  
L'angoixa llavadora,  
ja va dir la paraula més antiga.  
«I la resta és silenci.»

with terror all around her  
and wails as background music.  
The cleansing anguish  
has already said the oldest word.  
«And the rest is silence.»<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The title of this poem, «La dama bova,» refers to Lope de Vega's play in Spanish, *La dama boba*. There are at least eight translations of this play into English, and we have chosen the title given it by William I. Oliver, Bilingual Review Press, 1998.

<sup>4</sup> Thirty-nine years is the period from the death of Maria Beneyto's father in 1938 to the publication of the poem in 1977. Her father died as a consequence of an acute infection of a wound caused by shrapnel during the Spanish Civil War.

<sup>5</sup> *Hamlet*.

## TERRA

Jo tinc la veu nugada,  
els ulls empresonats  
i les mans mudes.  
Tu ets al davant,  
cor de mil cors on soc.  
Tu ets al davant  
vivint sota la corfa, l'espectacle,  
llauradora del vent,  
terra deserta  
on viuen multituds  
d'espectres, terra  
on no visc,  
on mai no podré viure,  
terra meua.

Òrfena de la mar, vaig créixer, i ara  
massa humida la rel,  
ja no tinc ulls ni mans, i cride  
amb veu desconeguda  
que no és meua.  
He vist els rats penats  
penant capvespres  
i he recordat banderes llegendàries,  
mentre esclata la traca tot arreu  
proclamant les raons  
que tenim per a ésser.  
(Pàtria, Mare.  
Cognoms de cendra i pluja  
després del gran incendi,

## MY LAND

My voice is knotted,  
my eyes imprisoned  
and my hands are mute.  
You are there, before me,  
heart of a thousand hearts where I am.  
You are there, before me,  
living beneath the crust, the spectacle,  
feminine tiller of the wind,  
a deserted land  
where multitudes  
of specters live, a land  
where I do not live,  
where I will never be able to live,  
my land.

I grew up, orphan of the sea, and now  
the root is too wet,  
my eyes and hands are gone, and I cry out  
with an unknown voice  
that is not mine.  
I have seen bats  
suffering at sunset  
and remembered legendary flags,  
while the fireworks exploded all around  
proclaiming the reasons  
we have to be.  
(Motherland, Mother.  
After the great fire  
surnames of ash and rain,

o «consumatum est»  
de tot el nostre.)

Ara cerque, de nit, a la tenebra  
—massa claredat t'esborrona en blancs,  
et fa quasi invisible—  
i em trobe amb mi mateixa  
enllà, a la voravia,  
trigant a reconéixer-me: D'on vens?  
M'alegre molt de veure't.  
I adeu, fins sempre. (Per desgràcia  
és així, fins sempre mai...)  
I l'altra, la dona que voldria ésser,  
se'n va a fer bells viatges en vaixells antics  
en impensats trineus  
i altres  
bogeries semblants...  
Jo reste, viva,  
dins la carn, dins el temps de la nit.  
Indefugible.  
I potser ni m'adone del fem  
que entre tots hem posat,  
com a garlanda  
al límit del carrer, ni dels...  
Deixem-ho.  
Deixem espirals de taronja, plors de ceba,  
el vidre,  
el suc podrit  
de la vida diària.  
Doncs ara, en primavera, sols és lícit  
parlar de flors.  
Parlem de flors, llavors.

or *consumatum est*  
of all we have.)

Now I search, in the night, the darkness  
—too much brightness blurs you into white,  
makes you almost invisible—  
and I find myself  
over there, on the sidewalk,  
slow to recognize myself: Where do you come from?  
It's so nice to see you.  
And goodbye, forever. (Unfortunately  
that's the way it is, forever and ever...)  
And the other, the woman she would like to be,  
goes on beautiful journeys in ancient ships  
on unthinkable sleds  
and other  
similar follies...  
I remain, alive,  
within the flesh, within the night.  
Unavoidable.  
And maybe I don't even notice the garbage  
that we've all put together,  
like a garland  
on the edge of the street, or the...  
Let's leave it there.  
Let's leave orange peel spirals, onion tears,  
glass,  
the rotten juice  
of daily life.  
Now, in the spring, it's only licit  
to talk about flowers.  
Let's talk about flowers then.

De nit. València.  
L'amor o el neguit,  
la tendra ràbia,  
la indignació  
ferida de feblesa...  
I altra vegada, subtilment,  
amb delicades punxes  
o rels de fils de sang,  
quelcom que torna  
a mossegar-se novament la cua.  
Que tinc la veu nugada,  
els ulls empresonats  
les mans mudes.  
Sense remei. Perduda,  
tancada en gàbia, en trampa.  
En la trampa que em fa emmudir,  
la trampa  
inevitable, boja,  
de l'amor que patesc  
per tu,  
malaltia inguarible  
de la que em moriré qualsevol dia.

At night. Valencia.  
Love or unease,  
tender anger,  
indignation  
wounded by weakness...  
And once more, subtly,  
with delicate thorns  
or roots of bloody threads,  
something that bites  
its own tail again.  
My voice is knotted,  
my eyes imprisoned  
and my hands are mute.  
Hopeless. Lost,  
Locked in a cage, trapped.  
In the trap that makes me dumb,  
the inevitable, crazy  
trap  
of the love I suffer  
for you,  
incurable disease  
of which I will someday die.



***DESPRÉS DE SOTERRADA LA TENDRESA***  
**AFTER THE BURIAL OF TENDERNESS**

1993





*Albat*  
Mario López Mayordomo

## ALBAT

*A Vicent Andrés Estelles, en la mort de la seua primera filla.*

La sang et va trencar la somnolència  
de quan dormies somnis sense mida.  
Claror d'un sol que és mort en altra vida  
a la teua foscúria era presència

i ets ara gel de llum, reminiscència,  
reminiscència freda i engrenyida  
d'un caliu, d'una veu que ja no crida,  
d'un cor petit tancat fins a l'absència.

Ací resta l'amor, l'alé, l'estona  
a penes, d'una vida sense centre  
i la pluja a la tarda i a la dona.

Tu ets ja als llimbs, on no hi ha sang que entre  
a desvetlar-te, i l'alba t'acarona  
al claustre d'una mare sense ventre.

## THE DEAD INFANT

*To Vicent Andrés Estellés, on the death of his first daughter.*

The blood broke into your somnolence  
when you slept with measureless dreams.  
The rays of a sun, in another life dead, gleam  
within your darkness as a presence

and now you are frozen light, reminiscence,  
reminiscence cold and knotted in ties  
of a warmth, of a voice that no longer cries,  
of a little heart enclosed in absence.

The love stays here, the breath, brief  
instant of a life without a center,  
and the afternoon rain, the woman, the wife.

Now you are in limbo, where no blood enters  
to wake you up, and sunrise touches you with light  
in the cloister of a mother with a womb of winter.





*Més enllà del capvespre*  
Arantxa García Martínez

## MÉS ENLLÀ DEL CAPVESPRE

Crida la terra amb massa veu, ens crida  
per a dir la paraula soterrada.  
Crida la terra, que és la mort tancada  
cercant els mots d'anomenar la vida.

Ve del si de la sang i la ferida  
pel carrer del no-res acaronada  
aquesta veu antiga i oblidada  
per la flor i l'insecte recollida.

Ens deixa nus, amb un record als ossos  
de tots els elements alçats en guerra  
pel cor llunyà feréstecs i confosos.

Esclata el naixement de la desferra  
sota els ulls de la llum, defciosos,  
i es torna nit el pànic de la terra.

## BEYOND THE SUNSET

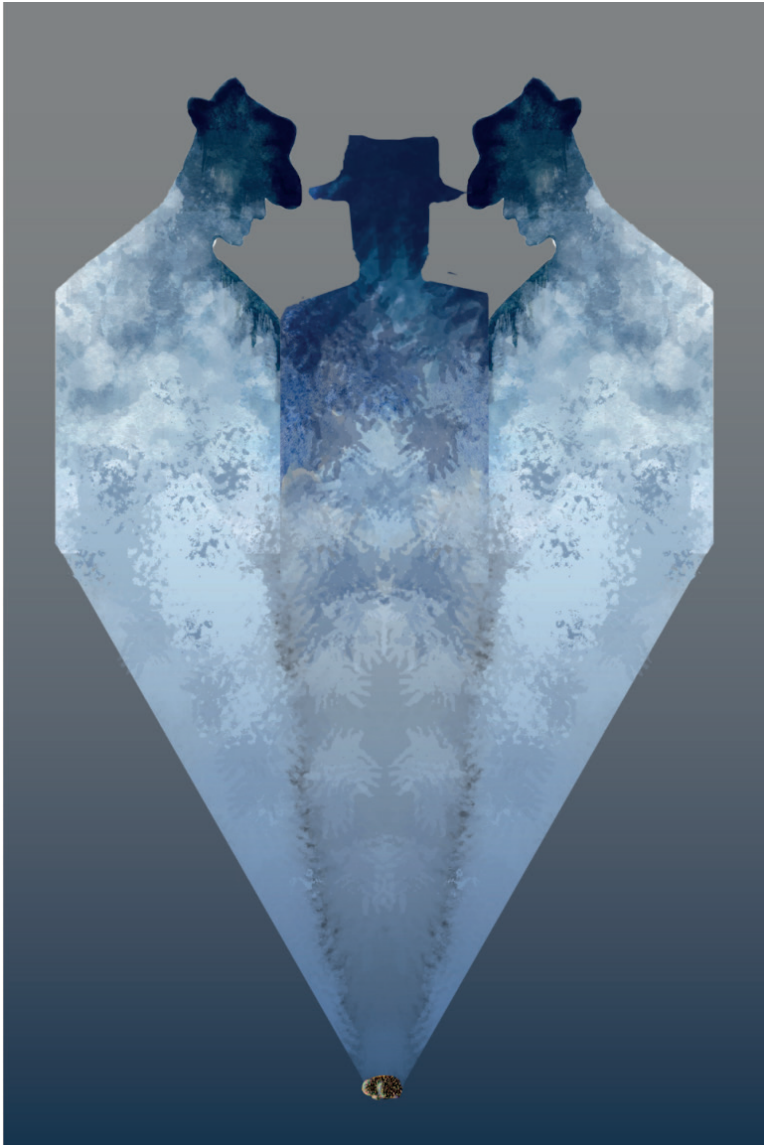
The earth cries out. It makes a claim  
that we pronounce the buried word aloud.  
The earth cries out, death enclosed in its shroud  
searching for the phrases to give life a name.

It comes from the bosom of the blood and the wound  
caressed in the street of emptiness and cold,  
this voice forgotten, forgotten and old,  
gathered by the insect and the opening bloom.

It leaves us naked, with an image in the bones  
of the elements of war, raised into sight  
by the distant heart, wild, confused, alone.

Under the anxious eyes of the light  
the birth of remnants explodes on its own  
and the panic of the earth sinks down into night.





*L'estrany*  
Mario López Mayordomo

## L'ESTRANY

L'home estrany ha passat  
solament amb un bri de paraula en la veu:  
Adeu!

L'home estrany no és feliç.  
Duu als ulls massa fred. Duu també massa nit  
al pit.

Jo voldria... ja és lluny.  
Sempre és tard. I ara plou fera pluja a l'instant  
voltant.

Amb la vida al roig viu  
van passant, van callant i potser van vivint  
o morint,  
els estranys, els qui són  
parts petites d'allò limitant i punxent:  
la gent.

Ai, les mans sense arrel!  
Ai, les mans sense arrel i llavor! Ai, les mans  
dels germans...!

L'home estrany ha passat  
i volent-li parlar amb el cor insabut,  
no he pogut.

L'home estrany ha passat,  
es podria aturar per a dir-me el gran mot  
i no pot.

## THE STRANGER

The stranger has walked by  
with only the hint of a word from his tongue:  
So long!  
The stranger is not happy.  
He carries too much cold in his eyes and too much darkness  
in his breast.  
I would like... he's a long way off.  
It's always late. And now the rain is pounding  
all around.  
With red hot lives  
they walk by, silent, and maybe they are thriving  
or dying,  
the strangers, who are  
tiny parts of all that is limiting and stinging:  
the people. Human beings.  
Oh the rootless hands!  
Oh the rootless, seedless hands! Oh the other  
hands of brothers!  
The stranger has walked by.  
I wanted to address him with my ignorant heart,  
and couldn't. We're apart.  
The stranger has walked by.  
He could halt here to tell me the important  
word, and can't.





*Ciutat bombardejada*  
Emma Niclós Llopis

## CIUTAT BOMBARDEJADA

Es trencava la pau blanca dels núvols.  
L'alta mort ens plovia vers la vida,  
i la infantesa es feia un crit de pedra,  
una negror petita.

Sols era cert que el cel, dalt del miracle  
d'altre jorn ben rebut, d'altra esperança,  
anava fent-se un foc pel món on érem  
la novella niuada.

Sols era cert que no arribava l'àngel  
que ens pogués dir les lletres de la joia.  
(Pensàvem àngels morts, sota la flama  
la socarrada ploma.)

La ciutat a l'entorn. I el cel a terra  
a trons inconeguts tot ell desfent-se.  
(On les coques amb mel? On la tendresa?  
On el Déu del pessebre?)

Cridàvem sota els llamps amb veu d'espurna.  
Trencat el sostre, Déu potser guaitava:  
Sols va respondre a enderrocs de pedra  
per l'absència més blava.

Era el clam infinit. La nostra terra,  
ferida al cor, ens deia sens paraules  
petits noms de la sang que s'enfugia.  
La terra, dessagnant-se...

## BOMBED CITY

The pure white peace of the clouds was broken.  
Lofty death rained down on us, on life,  
and childhood became a stone lament,  
a tiny blackness.

It was only true that the sky, above the miracle  
of another welcome day, of another hope,  
was turning into a fire in the world where we  
were the nest of the new.

It was only true that the angel who could tell us  
the letters of the jewel would not be coming.  
(We imagined dead angels, scorched feathers  
beneath the flame.)

The city and its outskirts. The sky and the ground,  
unknown thunders melting it all.  
(Where are the honey cakes? Where is tenderness?  
Where is the God of the manger?)

We screamed beneath the lightning with glowing voices.  
God might be watching through the broken roof.  
But he only responded to rubble and stone  
with a deep blue absence.

It was an infinite clamor. Our land,  
wounded in its heart, told us without words  
the little names of the blood that fled.  
The earth was bleeding out...

Ai, la infantesa closa a la tenebra,  
com va deixar amb foc les seues fites!  
Des d'un ressò vermell sota la cendra,  
els pànics ofegats encara criden.

Oh the childhood imprisoned in darkness,  
how it left its innocent games in the fire!  
From a scarlet echo beneath the ash,  
the smothered panic still screams.





*L'àngel darrer*  
Enrique Hernández Caravaca

## L'ÀNGEL DARRER

I quan l'àngel vermell vingué de sobte  
amb peus de neu i caminar de boira,  
la criatura de la casa vella  
jeia al racó de l'ombra.

Venia l'àngel de la sang. Calia.  
Era ja el temps assenyalat. Cridava.  
Indefugible, l'àngel-pont venia  
des d'una riba a l'altra.

Degué de travessar la guerra, els aires  
emmetzinats, ciutats enderrocades.  
Gent astorada el miraria vindre  
surant a ran dels arbres.

Venia d'una doll calenta i roja  
amb les ales mullades de ferida,  
de tèbia agror humana, de mort cega.  
Però duia la vida.

«Passeu avant.» La mare estén els llenços  
oblidats al calaix de l'esperança.  
L'esmoreïda criatura, amb pànic  
de la mort se'n tornava.

Al carrer els soldats cridaven himnes.  
I al voltant, dones rosses s'apropaven  
amb paraules antigues, alés tebis  
i llargues mans de nacre.

## THE LAST ANGEL

And when the red angel suddenly appeared,  
walking in the fog with feet of snow,  
the being in the old house  
lay in the corner of the shadow.

The angel of blood was coming. He had to.  
It was his appointed time. He called out.  
Inescapable, the angel-bridge reached  
from one shore to the other.

He had to go through the war,  
the poisoned air and demolished cities.  
Astonished people would watch him  
as he floated among the trees.

He came from a hot and red burst  
with wings wet with wounds,  
with warm human bitterness, with blind death.  
But he carried life.

«Step forward.» The mother unfolds the bed sheets  
forgotten in the drawer of hope.  
The feeble being, panicked  
by death, struggled to come back.

In the street, soldiers shouted out hymns.  
And all around, blonde women approached  
with outmoded words, warm breath  
and long mother-of-pearl hands.

Les dones ascendants li foradaven  
la pell, per viure al cos sense defensa  
que rebia l'ajut. La criatura  
refusava l'herència.

Cercà l'àngel. I l'àngel era un núvol  
no ja vermell, que el cel aclaparava.  
Després la nit esborronà la vida,  
una altra vida, estranya.

The ascendant women pierced  
its skin, to live in the defenseless body  
that received their help. The being  
refused its inheritance.

It looked for the angel. And the angel was a cloud  
no longer red, overwhelmed by the sky.  
Then night startled life,  
another life, uncanny.

## UNA DONA I UN HOME EN L'ALTA NIT

1

Sura i cau, decebuda, l'alta nit per la cambra.  
(La cuina pacífica ganivets sempre en guerra.)  
Ferits de taca humana, llençols humits. Desordre.  
La finestra trontolla vent del fred. Llunyaníssim,  
el vell amic noctàmbul de l'alcohol canta insomnis  
dins la suau follia d'un carrer de campanes.

La dona va reprendre, despenjada i fluixa,  
la pobra història activa, propera, de les hores,  
l'aspror, el buit del sexe satisfet, en l'arbreda  
d'un dia, d'una data qualsevol, d'un cadàver  
de temps, que s'ha de soterrar en penombra tèbia.  
(La dona enllà, a la torre nocturna del silenci.)

Al degoteig de l'aigua, el rellotge s'afilla.  
El llibre cau de braços que assagen morts incertes.  
La soledat, que és lliure, besa el cos que retorna  
al no ser, i la dona adormida ja tanca  
amb pany i clau la porta mitjanera que arriba  
a la fosca ceguesa dels ulls pel món del somni.

Els gats, coberts tots d'ungles que arrapen la foscuria,  
des de l'amor feréstec que els fa mal i els isola  
posen la nit a viure al voltant de la casa.  
Els fantasmes eròtics dels llençols se'n recorden.  
I la flor solitària que és al got cau en pètals  
fins l'ombra malaltissa tancada en si mateixa.

A WOMAN AND A MAN IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

1

Deep night floats and falls, disappointed, through the room.  
(The kitchen pacifies knives that are always at war.)  
Wounded with human stains, damp sheets. Disorder.  
The window trembles in the icy wind. Far away,  
the old sleep-walking friend of alcohol sings insomnia  
in the gentle madness of a street full of bells.

Dishevelled and weak, the woman resumed  
the poor, active, pressing history of the hours,  
harshness, the emptiness of satisfied sex in the grove  
of a day, of whatever date, of a corpse  
of time that must be buried in warm penumbra.  
(The woman out there, in the nocturnal tower of silence.)

The clock ticks on with the dripping of water.  
The book falls from arms that rehearse uncertain deaths.  
Solitude, free, kisses the body that returns to  
non-being, and the sleeping woman closes  
and locks the middle door that reaches through  
the world of dreams to the dark blindness of her eyes.

Cats, covered with claws that scratch the darkness,  
from the wild love that isolates and hurts them,  
set the night alive around the house.  
Erotic ghosts of the sheets remember.  
And the solitary flower in the glass releases its petals  
onto the sickly shadow, closed in on itself.

2

L'home se'n va a la nit. Enfora guaiten,  
al voltant de la casa, gats somnàmbuls.  
El fill mort, el neulit als llençols, passa  
a l'oblit d'allò tèrbol, secundari.  
Els graons de l'escala l'acomiaten  
i en el pati tancat ha tancat l'ombra.

Al carrer l'home troba nit humida.  
Uns individus malcarats l'esbrinen:  
Veuen la por de lluny, li fan rialles  
sentint-se prepotents, i amb veus rasposes  
curulles de mal vi, bròfecs, es perden.  
Ve una fulla surant, endarrerida.

Creuant la voravia, una rata  
bellugadissa és claveguera grisa  
i carn bruta de pànic. Xiula l'home  
*Casablanca* al record d'Ingrid Bergman  
sota el núvol que fa precés a la pluja.  
I els dels contenidors ja són penombra.

Al bell mig del carrer refusant l'ombra  
convida la xiqueta drogoaddicta  
a paradisos enlluernants de sexe;  
cinisme malaltís, perversió tendra  
i nuesa embalsada, és oferida  
amb la veu d'un ocell que està ofegant-se.

2

The man leaves at night. Outside  
of the house, sleepwalking cats are watching.  
The dead son, gaunt beneath the sheets, passes  
into the murky oblivion of the inessential.  
The steps of the staircase tell him goodbye  
and in the walled courtyard, his shadow has closed.

In the street, the man finds a humid night.  
Some hard-faced characters observe him.  
They see fear from afar and laugh at it,  
feeling arrogant, and with raspy voices  
full of cheap wine, foul-mouthed, they disappear.  
A belated leaf comes floating down.

A quivery rat crosses the pavement,  
the gray sewer and dirty flesh of panic.  
The man whistles Casablanca  
in memory of Ingrid Bergman  
under a cloud that prays to the rain.  
And those in the rubbish bins have turned into shades.

In the middle of the street, refusing the shadow,  
a little junkie invites him to  
a dazzling paradise of sex;  
sickly cynicism, tender perversion  
and packaged nudity, all are offered  
with the voice of a drowning bird.

Ve una flairor de gesmil i herba-sana  
dels indrets secretíssims, invisibles,  
on s'amaga el misteri. L'home arriba  
a aquell lloc on la vida trau l'orella  
per a sentir el món en costum aspre,  
i l'alta nit assaja el suïcidi.

The scent of jasmine and mint floats in  
from secret, invisible places where  
the mystery lies hidden. The man arrives  
at that place where life pricks up its ear  
to hear the grating habits of the world,  
and the deep night rehearses suicide.





*Desde la boira amb corbs*  
Patricia Niclós Llopis

DES DE LA BOIRA, AMB CORBS

1

El corb de Poe ve a la fira,  
i la dona barbuda  
des del roser més verinós  
aguaita.

En l'hora blava ens mira:  
Ulls d'importació, molt treballats,  
veuen, coneixen l'amagada  
frustració, l'ànima tèrbola  
i fins el desdejuni de llet freda  
i pa ensucrat.

Tu arribes  
des de lluny, amb l'enlluernada  
paraula malferida,  
i el gos té fam. Però el museu,  
l'església i el palau d'hivern  
amb l'esqueix d'on el príncep  
trau la rosa,  
tanquen la porta, i el teu món de marbre,  
daurada neu i reials meravelles,  
deixa caure cortines  
on l'argent pietós t'acaronà.

El dia és famolenc  
i l'au de dol veu la mentida tendra  
que ets, plorant vidre en foscúria,  
i no vol fer-te mal.  
La fira de les llums taca  
el record, colpejant, a mà esquerra

IN THE FOG, WITH RAVENS

1

Poe's raven comes to the fair,  
and the bearded woman  
lurks  
in the most venomous rose bush.  
In the blue hour, alien eyes,  
skillfully crafted, watch us,  
they know the hidden  
frustration, the murky soul  
and even the breakfast of cold milk  
and sugared bread.

You come  
from afar, with the dazzling  
badly wounded word,  
and the dog is hungry. But the museum,  
the church and the winter palace  
with the cranny from which the Prince  
took the rose  
close their doors, and your world of marble,  
golden snow and royal wonders  
drops curtains  
where the pious silver caresses you.

The day is hungry  
and the mourning bird sees the tender lie  
that you are, crying glass in the darkness,  
and does not want to hurt you.  
The fair of lights stains  
the memory, striking

del pit,  
on l'au roja li parla al corb, estàtic,  
dels difunts de la neu, encara vius  
al fum, i resta quieta,  
emmudida de sobte.

És teua  
la mà que crida al gran no-res  
i tanca així el teu buit de nacre i ònix?  
No tingues por. L'au de l'ombra  
se'n fuig. No vol entrar  
als somnis.

2

La donzella plorada, la nocturna rosa,  
la del no mai més,  
des de la neu  
fins a la mort, surava.  
I l'home trau la força  
dels astres més llunyans  
per a mirar-la;  
duu la flor moradenca,  
la desesperació i el suïcidi  
als ulls...

(El ball del príncep  
en temps no equidistants,  
posa la nit de festa,  
i al llac,  
la nau que va a enfonsar-se, sembla  
una ametla gegant, estranya i buida.)  
La mort més jove en ella, i més suau.

the left-hand side of the chest,  
where the red bird speaks to the motionless raven  
of the dead of the snow, still alive  
in the smoke, and then is still,  
suddenly silent.

Is it yours,  
the hand that cries out to the depths of nothingness,  
closing your onyx and mother-of-pearl void?  
Do not be afraid. The bird of shadows  
flees. He doesn't want to enter  
your dreams

2

The weeping maiden, the night rose,  
the maiden of nevermore,  
floated from the snow  
towards death.  
And the man draws strength  
from the farthest stars  
to look at her.  
She wears a purple flower,  
despair and suicide  
in her eyes...

(The prince's dance  
in syncopated rhythms,  
fills the night with gaiety,  
and in the lake,  
the sinking ship is like  
a giant almond, strange and empty.)  
Death in her looks younger and softer.

Mort que demana  
permís a l'ombra per a ser encara  
un alé, una mà que acomiada,  
un peu al ball, una síllaba, un xiscle  
pregant auxili... El no mai més tètric  
fet de flors, diu a penes  
la paraula prohibida. I l'home  
arrossegant carrers d'allucinada boira,  
de sobte ens veu dins la foscor  
a la vora de l'aigua  
i ens diu definitiva  
revelació.

Cau la nit. És massa tard.  
Cau la donzella  
al glaçat del silenci.  
(I fa fred més avall  
on són al remolí  
del no mai més,  
príncep i nau.)

Virgínia és morta a Boston  
i la vida és un corb gegantí  
amb les ales  
mullades d'alcohol brut i neu dissolta.

3

La veu blanca, la tendra  
subtileza, el vi, la neu, la rosa  
i el teu cor,  
van al reial indret  
on el príncep  
davalla a ser home

Death that begs  
permission of the shade to remain  
a breath, a hand that bids farewell,  
a step in the dance, a syllable, a scream  
imploping help... The gloomiest nevermore  
made of flowers, barely pronounces  
the forbidden word. And the man  
dragging streets of hallucinatory fog  
suddenly sees us in the darkness  
at the water's edge,  
and utters the ultimate  
revelation.

Night falls. It's too late.  
The maiden falls  
into the ice of silence.  
(And it's cold farther down  
where they circle in the whirlwind  
of nevermore,  
prince and ship.)

Virginia is dead in Boston  
and life is a gigantic raven  
with its wings  
soaked in brutish alcohol and melted snow.

3

The white voice, tender  
subtlety, wine, snow, the rose  
and your heart,  
go to the royal place  
where the prince  
descends to be a man,

potser tan sols aquest matí de cendra.  
Un home bru i estrany, perdent-se pels arbres  
del jardí misteriós, el jardí  
més estranger i més miracle  
del món, ben diferent d'uns altres  
mancats de boira i de misteri,  
on un sol gran i enfurismat, expressa  
l'excessiu, sense el bon gust de fer-se  
una miqueta tèrbol  
en un cel massa blau.

Arriba el príncep, envoltat com cal,  
de suau boirina. Et reconeix,  
et fa un somriure  
i els seus dits  
fets de nacre del nord i carn de lluna,  
t'acomien, festius.  
Les fonts enlairen al seu pas les aigües  
de la felicitat;  
els arbres alcen braços  
d'on l'au del paradís s'envola,  
i tot l'entorn, palaus, fonts, meravelles  
inconegudes,  
la neu dels monts, el vals, i les donetes  
patinadores,  
semblen viure al voltant del teu silenci  
fugitiu.  
I el príncep duu la rosa  
amb la mort al darrere.  
Duu la rosa  
i t'ofereix el pètal  
del més vermell pressentiment  
aquest matí de boira.

maybe just this morning of cinders.  
A strange dark man disappears among the trees  
of the mysterious garden, the most alien  
and most miraculous garden  
in the world, so different from others  
lacking in fog and mystery,  
where a splendid, angry sun enunciates  
all excesses, without the good taste to turn  
a little murky  
in a sky that is too blue.

The prince arrives, surrounded as he should be,  
by a soft fog. He recognizes you,  
offers you a smile  
and his fingers  
made of northern nacre and moonflesh  
bid you a joyful goodbye.  
The fountains raise the waters  
of happiness in their wake.  
The trees lift up their arms  
and the bird of paradise flies,  
and all of the surroundings, palaces, fountains,  
unknown wonders,  
the snow of the mountains, the waltz,  
and the skating women  
seem to live around your fleeting  
silence.  
And the prince brings the rose,  
followed by death.  
He brings the rose  
and offers you a petal  
of the reddest premonition  
on this morning of mist.





*Després de soterrada la tendresa*  
Emma Niclós Llopis

## DESPRÉS DE SOTERRADA LA TENDRESA

*A mos amics de tristor puc escriure  
no em basta temps a poder-me'n rependre.*

AUSIÀS MARCH

A mes amics de tristor puc escriure  
aquest jorn on crec dubtosament viure.

A mes amics. I allargue la mà estesa  
després de soterrada la tendresa.

Jo vinc d'un temps perdut. Soc mare i filla  
d'aquest monstre d'amor que em fa una illa.

I no tinc un vaixell per al viatge  
on la joia viu en estat salvatge.

Als amics de tristor, però, els diria  
la pau, i amb veus que riuen signaria.

\* \* \*

Potser si, aquest jorn on crec dubtosament viure  
i pense entendre al somni allò estrany de ser lliure,

coixí-coixam, com sempre, la pau es diu coloma  
i la serp més antiga emmetzina la poma.

Naus d'espills hipotètics, on s'embarca la bruixa  
de l'estriptís frenètic que entronitza la cuixa,

AFTER THE BURIAL OF TENDERNESS

*To my friends I can write  
that I have no time to recover from my sadness.*

AUSIÀS MARCH

To my friends I can write of sadness and grief  
this day when I believe my life will be brief.

To my friends. I stretch out my hand  
after tenderness is buried in the land.

I come from a lost time. I'm the daughter and the mother  
of this monster of love that makes me an island, an Other.

And I have no ship for the journey by sea  
to the place where joy lives wild and free.

I would, however, tell my friends of sadness, and after  
of the treaty of peace I would sign with voices in laughter.

\* \* \*

If maybe this day when I doubt I'm alive, and I seem  
to understand that it's strange to be free in my dream,

as always, hobbled and lame, peace is called a dove  
and the ancient snake poisons the apple of love.

The witch embarks on ships provided  
with hypothetical mirrors. Her frantic striptease enthrones her thighs,

avancen cap al límit de l'ansietat ferida,  
del malaltís desori i la carn maleïda

batejada naufragi, ciutat, claveguera,  
còctel del plor de l'ombra i la fam de la fera

on, per molt que m'esglaie, no accepte el sacrifici  
d'aquest vici de viure que tinc. Aquest mal vici.

\* \* \*

A mes amics allargue la mà estesa  
on la llum es fa sòlida i l'invisible pesa.

Sols això puc donar. Llum invisible  
i paraula que resta d'un clam inexhaurible.

Arribar de la pluja a la secor,  
de la humitat amplíssima dels caminals del plor

al besllum on la terra al sol festeja,  
enlluerna els ulls tèrbols, de l'oblit els neteja.

Els amics, embranzida d'un vaixell  
quiet ara a les ungles glaçades del rovell.

(Pel somordet ressò on viu l'absència,  
potser un dia o altre inauguren presència.)

\* \* \*

they sail on toward the limit of the mesh of  
wounded anxieties, sickly disorders and cursed flesh,  
christened as shipwreck, city, sewer, a feast or  
a cocktail of the tears of shadows and the hunger of beast  
where, even though it frightens me, I still refuse to sacrifice  
my vice of living. This evil vice.

\* \* \*

To my friends I stretch out my hand this day  
where the light becomes solid, the invisible weighs.

That's all I can give. Invisible light  
and the word that remains from a never-ending cry.

The rain reaches into the dryness, seeping,  
the vast humidity of the pathways of weeping

reaches the glow where the earth makes merry in the sun,  
to dazzle clouded eyes and wash away oblivion.

My friends, afloat on a ship whose thrust  
is held back now by fingernails of icy rust.

(Because of the dying echo in the dwelling-place of absence,  
they may some day inaugurate a presence.)

\* \* \*

Després de soterrada la tendresa  
vàrem llençar els pètals de la neu, que afegia  
més gel, al que amagava la glaçada disfressa  
on l'au del vidre congelat vivia.

Turmells de ballarina, amb les venes dolentes.  
El caliu quiet i ocult. Les mans creuades.  
Cent buits per avançar a les palpentos.  
A cor nu de la flama, les donzelles cremades.

Al soterrar anàrem. Eixam de nines tortes  
—un ull al frigorífic— estenia  
veus de paper, paraules plastificades, mortes.  
En secret el sepeli. Com calia.

\* \* \*

Jo vinc d'un temps perdut. Soc mare i filla  
de l'ombra omnipresent. Amb fil d'aram  
tanque la intimitat que em fa una illa.  
Enllà el poder del plom, la por, la fam.

(Temps del fred mossegant-li al foc la cua,  
temps d'arbres primitius i agres, del monstre  
vegetal. Pell del món en l'aigua nua,  
blau tremolor ferit de fum per sostre...)

Mare i filla, besàvia de la terra  
i encara amb por de nàixer, i vençuda  
pel dinosaure groc de la desferra,  
per sempre mai pel temps perdut perduda.

After the burial of tenderness  
we cast down petals of snow, to give  
more ice to the icy disguise of the nest  
where the bird of frozen crystal lived.

Ballerina ankles, with varicose veins.  
The quiet, hidden warmth. Hands crossed.  
A hundred voids to grope through in pain.  
Maidens at the naked heart of the flame, burning and lost.

We went to the funeral. A swarm of crooked, absurd  
manikins—one eye on the fridge—spoke in  
paper voices, plasticized lifeless words.  
A secret burial. As it should have been.

\* \* \*

I come from a lost time. I am daughter and mother  
of the omnipresent shadow. With copper wire  
I hold back the intimacy that makes me an isolated Other.  
Beyond the power of lead, or famine, or fear.

(The time of coldness that bites the tail of fire,  
the time of primitive, bitter trees, the enmity of  
the vegetal monster. Skin of the world in a watery mire,  
blue trembling wounded by smoke from a chimney...)

Mother and daughter, great-grandmother of the earth  
and still afraid to be born, and then defeated at last  
by the yellow dinosaur of destruction and dearth,  
lost forever in the lost time of the past.

\* \* \*

D'aquest monstre d'amor que em fa una illa  
herete el fum. I ell hereta de mi  
la indecisió, la por a la cruïlla,  
l'equívoca innocència del dofí.

Mare i filla del monstre em dic quan plou,  
criatura creuada pel misteri  
que fa llacs grocs dins del rovell de l'ou  
i rius folls de la sang en captiveri.

Maternitat feréstega. La fera  
glaçada als ulls, amb el desglaç promés.  
Cadell viu de l'insomni, missatgera  
de l'invisible, i filla del no-res.

\* \* \*

I no tinc un vaixell per al viatge  
ni un lloc per on piratejar ostatic,

mentre veig a les trenes de l'aurora  
com el sol mascle l'ampla mar desflora.

Amb cansament ferit als ulls, venia  
al llac que l'argent viu arrodonia.

I el grial no semblava fet de festa  
enllà, on l'àspid insurrecte resta.

\* \* \*

I take in the smoke from this monster of love that makes  
me an island. And from me the smoke takes in  
my indecision, my fear of crossroads and mistakes,  
the equivocal innocence of the dolphin.

When it rains, I call myself the daughter and mother  
of the monster, a creature infused with the mystery  
that forms yellow lakes within the egg yolk's cover  
and maddened rivers of blood in captivity.

Savage motherhood. The frozen beast  
in the eyes, and the promise of a thaw.  
A puppy living on insomnia, envoy released  
from the invisible, and daughter of the void.

\* \* \*

And I have no ship for the journey,  
or a home I can seize for my own,

while I watch in the braided ribbons of dawn  
as the masculine sun deflowers the open sea.

He came with wounded fatigue in his eyes  
to the lake on whose shores quicksilver lies.

And beyond, the grail where the treasonous asp lay  
hidden, seemed not to be made for festival days.

La nau entra a la nit, i és engolida  
per la boira del Nord, esmorteïda.

I no tinc un vaixell. I reste a casa  
on la mar fugissera mai no passa.

\* \* \*

On la joia viu en estat salvatge,  
boirines de la neu, enllà del mont,  
fan la fàbrica nova de l'oratge  
on l'aigua més lleugera és pluja i font.

A mitjanit, la lluna gegantina  
des del vídeo enyora el ball del blat.  
L'au del ponent, de dia, fa fugina  
ballarina amb les ànimes de gat.

I jo voldria entrar des de la vida,  
però, sens passaport i sens permís  
ni clau secreta, qui li pren la mida  
al besllum que es despulla en estriptís?

\* \* \*

Als amics de tristor, però, els diria  
que l'au del pit encara viu i nia.  
Que ja vindrà la nit, i la mà freda  
refusarà el lleu tacte de la seda

The ship sails into the night and disappears  
within the northern fog, stifling and drear.

And I don't have a ship. And I stay here at home  
where the fugitive sea will never come.

\* \* \*

Where joy lives in the wild, untethered,  
the snowy fogs beyond the mountain  
create a new factory of the weather,  
where the lightest of waters are rain and fountain.

At midnight, the gigantic moon, gone astray  
from a video, yearns for the dance of the wheat.  
The bird of the west flies off during day  
and dances with the souls of cats that it meets.

And I would like to enter from this life, this leisure,  
but having neither passport nor permit here,  
nor a secret key, who can take the measure  
of the glimmer that strips itself bare?

\* \* \*

I'd tell my friends in sadness, nevertheless,  
that the bird within my heart is still alive in its nest.  
The night will come, and the cold hand  
refuse the subtle touch of the silk, and

per a cercar d'una altra mà la mida  
en allò que potser encara és vida.

Us recomane el sol i l'específic,  
la tendra companyia, el frigorífic  
on refredar els somnis vells, a cura  
del grau de l'escaient temperatura.

I, en conhort xicotet, la frase feta:  
«Encara queda sol en la torreta.»<sup>6</sup>

\* \* \*

La pau. I amb veus que riuen signaria  
després de demanar la pau encara  
una vegada i altra. Cridaria  
negant l'ahir, cremant els límits: Ara.

Potser els rats penats que ixen del vespre  
taquen l'ara mateix voltant. La mida  
del record refusat que ompli el capvespre  
no diu la veritat ni la mentida.

Amics meus de tristor, ací un somriure  
i una abraçada en aquest jorn, per lliure.  
És de nit i ja el pa està a punt de coure.  
Adeu-siau, que es fa tard i vol ploure.

<sup>6</sup> *Encara queda sol en la torreta* (1931), obra de teatre del valencià Felip Melià Bernabeu (1898-1973).

search for another hand to give  
it whatever it needs to live.

I recommend the sun, and this medication:  
tender companions, and refrigeration  
to cool old dreams, and thus make sure  
to keep them existing at the right temperature.

And if you need solace, this old line:  
«Behind the clouds the sun still shines.»<sup>7</sup>

\* \* \*

Peace. With laughing voices I yet would ask  
for peace again and again. And then I'd cry out  
denying days past  
and burning all limits: Now.

Maybe the bats that emerge after twilight  
stain the present, wheeling in the air. The size  
of memories refused that crowd the night  
neither tells the truth nor lies.

My friends in sadness, I offer you a smile  
and a warm embrace for free this day.  
It's dark and the bread will be done in a while.  
Farewell! It's late and it looks like rain.

<sup>7</sup> Variant of line 12 from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem «The Rainy Day» (ca. 1856): «Behind the clouds is the sun still shining».



***ELEGIES DE PEDRA TRENCADISSA***  
**ELEGIES OF BRITTLE STONE**

1997





*La veu glaçada de la solitud*  
Patricia Niclós Llopis

*Jo sense tu. Quin trist silenci  
fan els sentits  
afeixugant-me cada passa  
sobre l'ahir!*

XAVIER CASP

## LA VEU GLAÇADA DE LA SOLITUD

La veu glaçada de la solitud  
adreçant-se com una serp desperta  
per músiques que arriben del no-res.

Pedra i vidre, germans, desfent-se. Llum  
acaronada pel malson. Gel negre  
liquant-se vers la neu, arran d'un mot...

D'aquesta dona tèrbola, habitant  
del temps adolorit, rep la paraula  
—home que vares ser— on viu l'enyor.

*Me without you. What a sad silence  
the senses make  
weighing down my every step  
through yesterday!*  
XAVIER CASP

## THE FROZEN VOICE OF SOLITUDE

The frozen voice of solitude  
arises like a snake woken up  
by music out of nothingness.

Stone and glass, brothers, breaking apart.  
Light caressed by nightmares. Black ice  
melting into the snow, on the verge of utterance...

Receive the word—man that you were—  
from this gloomy woman, inhabiting  
a sorrowful time where longing lives.

## CERCANT CULPABLE

Perquè ets al buit i a la claror quieta  
pinte el teu nom a les parets, als sostres,  
i, a la finestra, el corb retalla mostres  
del paisatge, volant amb l'ala dreta.

Dubte ser viva si tu ets mort. Desfeta  
pense el misteri de les coses vostres  
—dels que ja et són companys— i aquestes nostres  
les posaré a remull en aigua neta.

Te'n vas de l'aire, el sol, la mar, i d'eixa  
tristor on s'amagava sibillina  
l'au de la por. Te'n vas de mi mateixa.

Culpable qui, de l'ombra on soc veïna,  
d'aquest mig cor que resta en mi i es queixa...?  
La pluja ho sap: la mort és l'assassina.

## SEARCHING FOR A CULPRIT

Because you're in the void, the motionless light,  
I paint your name on the walls, on the ceilings,  
while in the window, the raven cuts out bright  
clear snippets of landscape, on its right wing gliding.

I doubt I'll be alive if you are dead. Undone,  
I ponder the mystery of your things  
—of those who are now your companions—and every one  
of ours, I'll soak in water, cool and cleansing.

You have left the air, the sun, the sea  
and the sorrow where the bird of fear  
hides itself like a sibyl. And now you're leaving me.

Culprit who, of the shadow where I'm living still or  
this half heart that protests in me constantly...?  
The rain knows the truth. It knows that death is the killer.





*Entre parets perduda*  
Patricia Niclós Llopis

## ENTRE PARETS PERDUDA

Llunyana,  
exclosa de l'estiu,  
del vent,  
de la flairor del camp a bona terra,  
i de la mar que ens fa respirar peixos,  
vinc de les rodalies  
de la cendra, i els ulls  
pateixen tanta llum enfurismada.  
Venen  
aus endolades  
—corb o oroneta—  
a refusar presències  
dels ocells que transporten  
l'aire en somrís  
i fins les fulles del gerani saben  
que a la casa  
han vingut les aus negres a fer niu.  
Dona esquinçada  
d'aquest absurd miracle de la vida,  
entre parets perduda,  
rep visites  
d'avantpassats inèdits,  
espectres de cristall que es fan a trossos  
si els crides pel seu nom,  
gent indecisa entre el no viure  
o el passar avant  
a la tenebra on visc  
usuària de corfes i residus,

## LOST BETWEEN WALLS

Far away,  
excluded from the summer,  
from the wind,  
from the smell of good land in the country,  
and from the sea that makes us breathe in fish,  
I come from the neighborhood  
of ashes, and my eyes  
suffer so much furious light.  
Birds in mourning  
—ravens or swallows—  
come  
to refuse the presence  
of birds that carry  
the air in a smile  
and even the leaves of the geranium know  
that black birds have come to nest  
in the house.  
A woman torn apart  
by this absurd miracle of life,  
lost between walls,  
lets in visits  
from unknown ancestors,  
spectres of glass that shatter  
if you call them by name,  
indecisive people, caught between  
not living and moving forward  
into the darkness where I live,  
user of shells and waste,

claus sense pany  
i la distància,  
el fosc envelliment del pa  
florint-se,  
atacat per l'oblit  
enllà la cuina...  
I el silenci pertot arreu, fred,  
batejant-me  
viuda del goig,  
dient-ho  
als mobles, al balcó,  
a les ungles brutes  
del buit,  
fins a l'insomni,  
vell padrí de les meues esponsalles  
amb el fill  
—amb tots els fills—  
de l'ombra.

keys without lock,  
distance,  
the dark aging of bread  
going stale,  
attacked by oblivion  
out beyond the kitchen...  
And the cold silence everywhere,  
baptizing me  
a widow of joy,  
announcing it  
to the furniture, the balcony,  
the dirty fingernails  
of the void,  
into the sleepless night,  
old godfather of my betrothal  
with the son  
—with all the sons—  
of the shadow.





*Sense tu*  
María Payá Escobar

## SENSE TU

«Et trobes bé?» I, en dir-ho,  
un toll d'arbres  
feia la gran revolució feréstega  
de les fulles, al bell mig del capvespre  
i el cànter, fa segles absent de la cuina,  
demanava a l'aigua  
protecció i miracle.

Era quan les culleres  
esmolaven la fam,  
i els xiquets que vindrien,  
llums inèdits,  
deien en tu la predicció més certa,  
que tornarà, que ja tornes.  
I jo he de trobar-te, regirant  
ulls infantils,  
ungletes  
que venen arrapant la vida,  
llavis  
tots famolencs de veritat nutrícia  
que fereixen la nit  
—ampla i amb pits de dona—  
quan ofereix llet de silenci.

«Et trobes bé?»  
Fa fred i no,  
no em trobe gens bé,  
gens assentada a la claror,  
gens viva  
sense tu.

## WITHOUT YOU

«Are you all right?» And as I heard these words,  
a wild upheaval  
flustered the leaves  
in a copse of trees at sunset,  
and the pitcher, missing from the kitchen for centuries,  
begged the water  
for protection and miracle.

That was when the spoons  
made hunger sharper,  
and the children who would come,  
invisible lights,  
whispered you the truest of predictions,  
that he would return, that you were already coming back.  
And I have to find you, rolling  
childish eyes,  
tiny fingernails  
scratching at life,  
lips  
hungry for the food of truth  
that wound the night  
—teeming with women's breasts—  
when it offers the milk of silence.

«Are you all right?»  
    It's cold and no,  
I'm not all right at all,  
not at ease at all in this dim light,  
not alive at all  
without you.





*La casa*  
Alexia Such Hidalgo

## LA CASA

«La pau sia.» I no passes de la porta.  
La casa et fa neguit, et fa temença.  
Mires endins la por arrossegant-se,  
la pols, la febre... I, a recules, fuges.

És la mateixa casa, te'n recordes?  
Sols que ja les cadires i la taula  
tenen els ossos fluixos. I la llàntia  
plorosa, torta, al degoteig s'afilla.

El fred tancat al buit pren de la pluja  
lleu humitat. La fosca és una illa  
intermitent, surant, si a la finestra  
els llums que van i venen toquen mare.

Endinsat cap al nord hi ha un gat, un tigre  
adormit als genolls de la desferra.  
Passa avant. Toca els llavis del silenci.  
Vine a seure al davant del gel inèdit.

Visc a la casa, jo? Ho dubte. Sembla  
que altra dona vesteix la meua roba,  
para la taula, menja pa... I s'oblida  
de la son, puix que tota la nit canta.

I canta les cançons velles del poble  
de la foscúria. Canta, canta, canta,  
i atrau així les aus d'ales enceses  
que, en revolar, deixen el foc enfora.

## THE HOUSE

«Peace be with you.» And you don't go through the door.  
The house makes you anxious, it makes you afraid.  
You look inside the creeping fear,  
the dust, the fever... And you go back, you run away.

It's the same house, remember?  
It's just that the chairs and the table  
already have loose bones. And the crooked,  
weeping lamp finds refuge in its dripping.

The cold enclosed in the void takes in moisture  
from the rain. The darkness is a fitful, flashing  
island, when the lights darting to and fro  
in the window get to base.

A cat lies deep in the north, a tiger  
asleep at the knees of the ruins.  
Come in. Touch the lips of silence.  
Come and sit before the unknown ice.

Do I live in the house? I doubt it.  
It seems that another woman wears my clothes,  
sets the table, eats bread... And forgets  
to sleep because she sings all night.

And she sings old songs of the people,  
of darkness. She sings, sings, sings,  
and attracts the birds with burning wings  
that hovering, leave the fire in the distance.

Canta el caliu de la donzella nua,  
el bell gegant d'argent que viu a l'alba,  
els homes fets de fusta que són arbres,  
la sirena endolada al meu Mar Negre.

Canta els que resten quiets amb peus de pedra,  
i els que somnien neu de matinada.  
Canta, i et crida pel vell nom que amagues.  
(La mort que viu en tu, riu. I contesta.)

She sings the warmth of the naked maiden,  
the beautiful silver giant that lives in the dawn,  
the men made of wood who are trees,  
the mermaid, mourning in my Black Sea.

She sings the ones who stand unmoved with feet of stone,  
and the ones who dream of snow at sunrise.  
She sings and calls you by the ancient name you hide.  
(The death that lives in you, laughs. And answers.)





*Vens*  
Héctor Sierra Valverde

VENS...

Vens a dir-me que fa fred  
a la verema d'ombres.  
Que ets enllà, al cor de la paraula nua.  
Que tens por de mirar-me viva.  
Que ara  
ja no mai més tindrà raó l'oblit.  
I avances  
cap a la pluja, on la tardor neteja  
el que resta de sol.

Vens a la insatisfacció de la cadira  
a seure buit,  
i a sanejar la pau ferida en l'ala.  
Vens a no ser  
i a dir-me  
que potser jo tampoc  
soc nada encara.

(La pluja, fil a fil, fila  
el vestit d'aigua  
que el record li demana.)

YOU COME...

You come to tell me it's cold  
in the harvest of shadows.  
That you are beyond, in the heart of the naked word.  
That you are afraid to look at me alive.  
That now  
oblivion will never be right again.  
And you move  
toward the rain, where autumn cleanses  
the remains of the sun.

You come to the chair, disappointed  
to be empty,  
and to heal the wounded peace in your wing.  
You come not to be  
and to tell me  
that maybe I'm still not  
anything yet.

(The rain, thread by thread, stitches  
the water dress  
that memory demands.)





*Presència*  
Enrique Hernández Caravaca

## PRESENCIA

La solitud greu de l'hivern,  
la casa buida,  
la pluja demanant pau per als morts,  
els llums encesos  
qui sap on,  
amb els gats de gener  
surant,  
desfent-se  
al vent,  
i aquella vella solitària  
carregada amb la nit  
que li fa tant de mal als muscles,  
tots venen a pregar  
una oració per al silenci  
que també, sobtadament,  
s'ha mort.

I tu remugues  
tornaveus de paraula,  
xiscles, xiules. I beses Ingrid Bergman  
a punt de prendre l'avió,  
amb el bes prohibidíssim  
que als ulls es confessava...

Dis-me, ja trobes  
la nit més suportable?  
I la vida?  
Et dol encara als ossos  
que l'han perdut, i semblen  
marbre d'un temple antic?

## PRESENCE

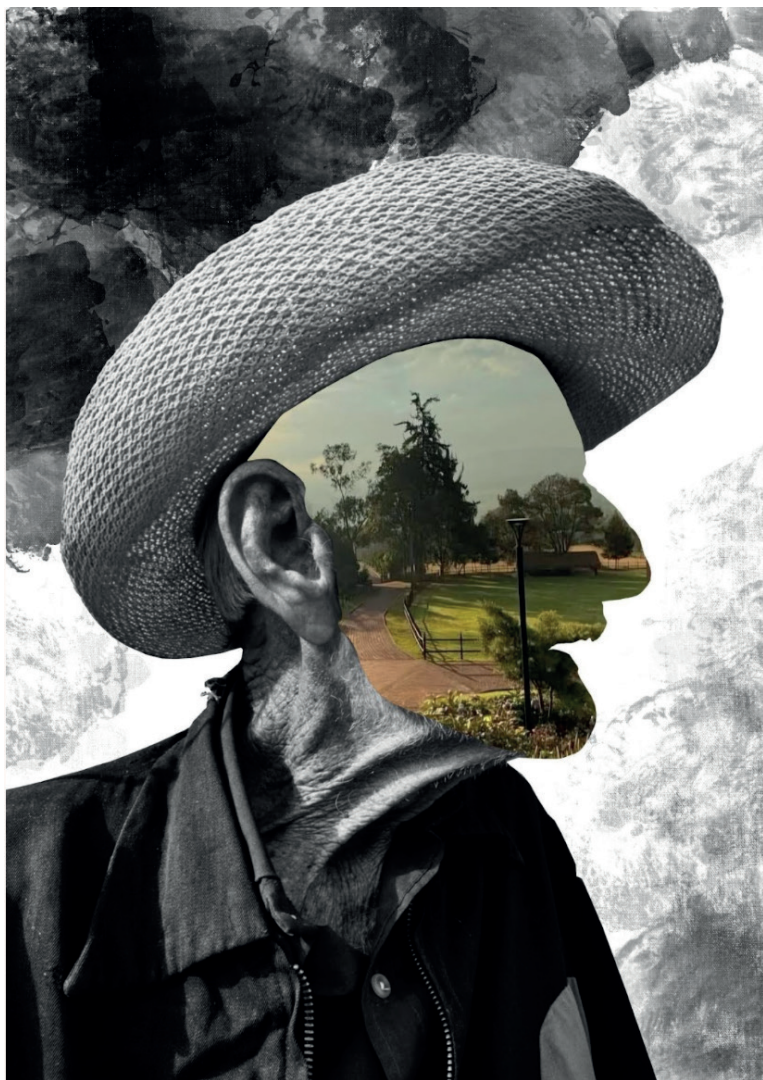
The grave loneliness of winter,  
the empty house,  
the rain asking for peace for the dead,  
the lights on  
who knows where,  
with the January cats  
floating,  
melting  
in the wind,  
and that lonely old woman  
loaded down with the night  
that hurts her shoulders so much,  
they all come to offer  
a prayer for the silence  
that has also  
suddenly died.  
And you mutter  
echoes of words,  
screams, whistles. And you kiss Ingrid Bergman  
about to take the plane,  
with the forbidden kiss  
that she confessed with her eyes...

Tell me, do you find  
the night more bearable?  
And life?  
Do your bones still feel the pain  
of having lost it? Do they look like  
marble from an ancient temple?

Ets a la nit,  
al carrer, a la porta,  
a la clau,  
que soc encara a dintre  
i estic viva.

You're in the street  
at night, at the door,  
in the key,  
I'm still inside  
and I'm alive.





*Vell solitari*  
Selma Guerrero Luna

## VELL SOLITARI

Aquell vell que s'acosta  
ombra avall,  
ve a la tardor a viure.  
Un lliri blanc de vidre  
als ulls del suïcida nou,  
l'acomiaada.  
L'home sol,  
l'aguaita l'arbre  
que està patint a la mullada terra,  
la llum desfeta,  
i fulles, i aus ferides,  
i la mà que no pot  
tocar el somni  
on les dones de pedra  
fetes del temps perdut,  
volen tornar a seure  
al davant de la vida.

## LONELY OLD MAN

That old man who approaches  
down the shadows  
is coming to live in autumn.  
A white glass lily  
in the suicide's eyes  
bids him goodbye.  
The tree awaiting  
the lonely old man  
is suffering in the dampened ground,  
the faded light,  
and leaves, and wounded birds,  
and the hand that cannot  
touch the dream  
where women made of  
stone and lost time  
are yearning to sit once more  
in the presence of life.

## LA VELLA DONA DEL VELL GOS

Ve al capvespre, amb els cabells tintats  
de groc solar, i amb el vestit  
grismoradenc,  
els ulls a terra  
com si cercara de trobar uns passos  
que podrien restar encara immòbils,  
o una moneda antiga, o el miracle  
de no tenir-se por, quan es recorda  
de no haver estat viva.  
Mira a la terra sempre. El gos amb ella  
—apèndix del seu braç—  
camina  
espaiant la distància.  
Vell i vella tots dos,  
miren enrere  
per si ja duu l'espasa nua i negra  
l'àngel del fred.  
El gos és cec, la dona és sorda.  
Els espanta sovint la gent,  
els dubtes  
de tenir ben correcte el cap al coll,  
ben posada la vida.  
L'he cridat  
i el vell gos ha aixecat als meus ulls tèrbols  
la seua ceguetat maligna.  
I ella, la dona  
que ha vist la meua veu,  
pregunta

## THE OLD DOG'S OLD WOMAN

She comes at dusk, in her gray and purple dress,  
with her dyed hair  
yellow as the sun  
and her eyes on the ground,  
as if searching for some footsteps  
that might still be unmoving,  
or an ancient coin, or the miracle  
of not being frightened of herself when she remembers  
not having been alive.  
She always looks at the ground. The dog at her side  
—an appendage of her arm—  
trots along  
measuring the distance.  
Both of them are old,  
they turn around  
in case the angel of the cold  
is already carrying the black and naked sword.  
The dog is blind, the woman is deaf.  
They are often frightened by people,  
the uncertainty  
of having their heads on their necks,  
their lives set right.  
I called the old dog  
and he raised his evil blindness  
to my clouded eyes.  
And she, the woman  
who has seen my voice,  
asks me

qui soc.

—«És aquella, vinguda enllà del vespre,  
el polsim de la terra d'una illa,  
l'aïllada», —diu la pedra  
del monument, i els bancs,  
i els arbres,  
i els massissos prenyats de flor.

(L'aïllada, sí,  
que aquesta identitat  
mai no l'amague.)

S'allunya el gos, cercant herbetes  
de misteri, al jardí,  
i la dona  
sembla extraure-li músiques inèdites  
al gran silenci on viu.

who I am.

«It is she who comes from beyond the sunset,  
the dust of the land of an island,  
the isolated one,» says the stone  
of the monument, and the benches,  
and the trees,  
and the flower beds pregnant with bloom.

(The isolated one, yes,  
may she never  
hide her identity.)

The dog moves away, searching for mysterious  
grasses in the garden,  
and the woman  
seems to garner unknown music  
from the profound silence where she lives.





*Animălia*  
Sara Pedroche Pastor

## ANIMÀLIA

Al massís de les roses,  
una gossa ha tingut la seua cria.  
Li envie el pa mullat amb llet,  
la pietat i la paraula vella  
que va estenent-se  
a l'entorn de les nou vides que criden  
el descontentament de la ceguesa  
davant l'hostilitat greu de les flors.

És prompte encara.  
Quan la gent  
acoste a la placeta  
els seus somnis trencats,  
el temps que els assassina,  
el riure i l'enyor,  
què faran  
d'aquesta massa d'animàlia tendra?  
Els cadells  
tenen la mort a punt,  
el patiment, el pànic?  
Potser una mà amiga...  
Potser un bri de la tendresa  
encara...  
No vull assabentar-me'n.  
El gest covard  
—temença d'augmentar-me  
la ferida un poc més—  
em fa tancar bé la finestra,

## ANIMALIA

In the teeming bed of roses  
a bitch has had her brood.  
I send her bread soaked in milk,  
compassion and the old word  
that spreads throughout  
the nine lives, crying out  
the discontent of blindness  
before the serious anger of the flowers.

It's still early.  
When people  
bring their broken dreams  
to the square,  
the time that kills them,  
their laughter and longing,  
what will they do  
with this mass of tender animalia?  
Are puppies ready  
for death, suffering,  
panic?  
Perhaps a friendly hand...  
Perhaps a bit of tenderness  
still...  
I don't want to know.  
The cowardly gesture  
—fear of making  
my wound a little worse—  
compels me to shut the window tight,

i la cortina  
m'aïlla totalment del que resta als massissos  
on s'enlairen les roses  
i on avui es deixa caure  
—amb vint-i-quatre graus de febre—  
el sol.

and the curtain  
closes me off from what remains among the flowers  
where the roses rise up  
and today the sun  
—with twenty-four degrees of fever—  
goes down.

## XIQUET QUE TIRA PEDRES

I qui sap on i contra qui les llança.  
Potser ho ignora. Als arbres, per ser fusta.  
A les xiquetes, perquè riuem.  
Als vells, per la misèria  
de l'espectacle aqueix  
d'anar-se'n poc a poc  
a la distància...

En llançar la pedra, ell llança  
la ràbia i el neguit,  
la disconformitat, l'angúnia.  
A la finestra, però,  
jo diria que no és ràbia ni és odi  
aquest missatge de la pedra.  
A la finestra, crida  
la solidaritat. Colpeja  
la comprensió.  
A la finestra  
protesta, amb mi, per tot:  
per la impotència  
de canviar un bon toll d'impossibles,  
i el fàstic, la condemna  
d'arrossegar la vida amb tots els claus  
ferint-la  
(al cor, com a mi,  
al cervell, com a ell.)  
Alhora mire les mans actives  
que es fan càrrec

## THE BOY WHO THROWS STONES

And who knows where he throws them and at whom.  
Maybe he doesn't know. At the trees, because they're wood.  
At the girls, because they laugh.  
At the old, because of the pitiful  
spectacle of disappearing  
little by little  
into the distance...

By hurling a stone, he hurls  
anger and anxiety,  
dissent and anguish.  
At the window, however,  
I would say that this message from the stone  
is neither anger nor hatred.  
At the window, he cries out  
for solidarity. He pummels  
understanding.  
At the window  
he protests, with me, about everything:  
about the incapacity  
to change a first-class pool of impossibilities,  
and the disgust, the condemnation  
of dragging life with so many nails  
wounding it  
(in the heart, as with me,  
in the brain, as with him.)  
And then I watch the active hands  
that take on

de la justícia que ell no entén  
restar feixugues, desmaiades  
sota els meus ulls,  
llavors quan la placeta és al desert diari  
i jo li dic adeu,  
al dia.

responsibilities he doesn't understand  
turn awkward, faint  
beneath my gaze,  
while the square becomes its daily desert  
and I say goodbye  
to the day.

## LA PARELLA

Ells han perdut de vista el món al banc.  
No coneixen ningú.  
Són tots dos la sang cega, el miracle  
que es repeteix: mans en la foscor lliurades  
a la delícia. Bes a la claror feixuga  
de l'acaronament suau, suau...

Jo aguaite.  
Amb la innocència d'un cadell,  
els mire  
sense entendre tendror, luxúria  
o encantament feréstec,  
des de l'oblit.  
I l'home jove que no entén  
que no estic entenent-los, crida:  
«Què hi ha?»  
Reste perplexa  
a terres de ningú.  
Desconeguda.  
Però he begut un glop  
de besllum al record,  
i endinsada en mi,  
vaig de l'amnèsia al somni,  
on l'abraçada teua  
em deia que era dona.  
I que vivia.

## THE COUPLE

On the bench, they've lost sight of the world.  
They don't know anyone.  
They're blind blood, the miracle  
that repeats itself: hands in the dark given over  
to delight. A kiss to the ponderous brightness  
of soft, gentle caressing..

I lie in wait.  
Innocent as a puppy,  
I watch them  
from oblivion  
without understanding tenderness, lust  
or wild enchantment.  
And the young man who doesn't understand  
that I don't understand them, shouts:  
«What is it?»  
I remain perplexed  
in no-man's-land.  
Unknown.  
But I've taken a sip  
of the glimmer of memory,  
and deep within myself  
I slip from amnesia to dream,  
where your embrace  
made me know I was a woman.  
Made me know I was alive.





*Núvia i fotogràf*  
Alexia Such Hidalgo

## NÚVIA I FOTÒGRAF

Recolza a l'arbre ansietat de vida.  
És dolça, blanca, lleugera, com cal.  
I va al fotògraf tot dictatorial  
acostant-li el bell món fet a la mida.

Toca la llum que la reté ferida  
d'amor, per on l'aurora boreal  
és simulada per l'allau floral  
—trampa feliç— i la mire entenedrida...

No vulgues veure tu, núvia, no veges  
què és al revers ocult del vestit teu,  
on els ulls clars, il·luminats, neteges.

«El perfil, el somris...» I, si la veu  
dels vels mana fer ales, tu aletesges  
en el dia més càlid de la neu.

## BRIDE AND PHOTOGRAPHER

She rests her anxiety for life against the tree.  
She is sweet, white and lithe, just as she should be.  
And she goes to the dictatorial photographer,  
bringing him a beautiful world made to measure.

Wounded by love, she touches the brightness  
that holds her, where an avalanche of rich bold  
flowers simulate the northern lights  
—a felicitous trap—and moved, I behold her..

You do not want to see, oh bride,  
what's hidden inside of your nuptial clothes,  
where you cleanse your limpid and shining eyes.

«The profile, the smile...» And if the low murmur  
of the veils entreats you to grow wings, you fly  
on the warmest day of the snow.



***BRESSOLEIG A L'INSOMNI DE LA IRA***  
**ROCKING THE INSOMNIA OF ANGER**  
2003





*Bressoleig a l'insomni de la ira*  
Romina Marcela Carate Tortajada

## BRESSOLEIG A L'INSOMNI DE LA IRA

Ella podria fer-ho, com ho feia  
quan la infantesa teua reclamava  
bressoleig i cançons. Ella sabia  
adormir la ira, acaronar-la,  
i defensar-te del malson de dur-la  
tothora al teu costat. Tu no saps fer-ho.  
No s'adorm. Li fa mal alguna cosa  
que a tu et fa mal també. I en vindre el dia  
us trobarà nedant claror i insomni.  
Ja ho veus: no vol la ira amb tu adormir-se.  
No la saps bressolar com cal. L'enutja  
la teua torpitud en intentar-ho.  
(Ella sí que sabia...)

## ROCKING THE INSOMNIA OF ANGER

She could do it, as she did  
when your childhood demanded  
rocking and songs. She would know  
how to put anger to sleep, caress it,  
and defend you from the nightmare  
of always having it by your side. You can't do it.  
It doesn't fall asleep. Something that hurts you  
hurts it too. And when day comes,  
you will both be swimming in light and insomnia.  
You see, anger doesn't want to fall asleep with you.  
You don't know how to rock it properly.  
Your clumsiness annoys it.  
(She would surely know how...)





*L'insecte*  
Clara Fontanet Tortajada

## L'INSECTE

L'insomni de la ira, a cau d'orella,  
és un insecte d'ales curtes,  
un insecte de veu lletja, enfurida.  
La nit que ho sent i es cansa,  
volent-te defensar, et recomana  
el record de la pau, l'alé de l'àngel  
que sura al cap del llit,  
la veu tranquil·la  
de la dona que ahir et bressolava,  
la música dels astres, el silenci  
i la remor menuda de la pluja  
al jardí que no tens. (L'insecte  
es morirà en fer-se de dia  
però a la nit següent tornarà a nàixer  
i a oferir-te raons per a ser un ésser  
a qui la vida li fa mal, i es queixa.)

## THE INSECT

The insomnia of anger is a short-winged insect,  
buzzing in your ear,  
an insect with an ugly, angry voice.  
The night that hears it and gets tired,  
eager to defend you, recommends  
the memory of peace, the breath of the angel  
floating at the head of your bed,  
the calm voice  
of the woman who rocked you yesterday,  
the music of the stars, the silence  
and the light murmur of the rain  
in the garden that you don't possess. (The insect  
will die at dawn  
but the following night it will be born again  
and will offer you reasons to be a being  
who is hurt by life, and complains.)





*Prec*  
Aitana Tinoco Castillo

PREC

*Deixes la vida,  
et deixa a tu la vida...*

*Que algú t'estime!*

*Per amor de Déu, que algú et plora!*

LLUÍS RODA

Demanes que algú et plora, sí, ho demanes.  
Penses, com el poeta, la foscúria  
d'aqueix després, d'aquella greu sequera  
que algun ruixat de plor mitigaria.  
Però i si no et plora ningú, què passa?  
En tot cas ets matèria trencadissa,  
ossets per tot arreu o cendra morta  
que et redueix a alé de la tenebra  
feta pols per a tu. Sí, que algú et plora,  
no fora cas que per manca d'aigua, oblides  
que vares tenir sang que el temps va beure  
emborraxant-se d'ella (miserable  
fill de la mare eternitat). Que et plora  
la llum que vas tenir, el cor que deixes  
—que això no pots endur-t'ho a l'estesa  
rapacitat del bell caníbal tendre  
que collecciona cors— com més inhàbils  
com més amorosits i amb més misèria  
humana, i colpejada, i enfurida  
més benivolguts pel fang seran. Que et plora  
plorant-se a si mateix, sense adonar-se'n,  
el que et fa mal, el que et vol bé, el lloc tebi  
que et va contindre. I, a la fi, si et plora

PLEA

*You leave your life,  
your life leaves you...  
May someone love you!  
For the sake of God, may someone mourn you!*  
LLUÍS RODA

You plead for someone to mourn you, yes, you plead.  
You think, like the poet, of the darkness  
of that hereafter, of that terrible drought  
that a sprinkling of tears would mitigate.  
But what if no one weeps for you, what then?  
In any case, you are made of brittle matter,  
little bones spread out or dead ashes  
that reduce you to the breath of darkness  
turned to dust for you. Yes, may someone weep for you  
unless, for the lack of water, you forget  
that you once had blood that time imbibed  
becoming drunk (miserable  
son of mother eternity). May the light  
you once had weep for you, the heart you leave  
—you can't take it with you to the hungry  
avarice of the beautiful, tender cannibal  
who gathers hearts—the more inept,  
the more in love and with more human  
misery, beaten and enraged,  
the more loved will they be by the mud. May it weep for you,  
not knowing that it weeps for itself,  
that which hurts you, that which loves you, the warm place  
that one time contained you. And in the end, if it improbably

inversemblant la llàgrima que un dia  
va deixar per a tu la dona aquella  
de la llet i el caliu d'on vares treure  
ocasió d'anar cap a la vida,  
per què vols més? Si de cas et plora l'odi  
ja penedit, refusa'l. Cara a cara  
et va ferir la sang. Que vaja a prendre  
les lliçons del fil d'aram d'aquell amb punxes.  
Que et plore la tardor de les tempestes  
i la mar, que és la llàgrima més viva,  
adequada al mort que tens a dintre  
i la carn que per un temps rellogares  
quan potser el desnonament és a la porta.

weeps the tear that one day  
left for you that woman with the milk  
and the warmth that gave you the chance  
to go towards life,  
why would you want more? Should the penitent hatred  
weep for you, refuse it. Face to face  
it has wounded your blood. May it learn  
the lessons of the barbed wire.  
May they weep for you, the stormy autumn  
and the sea, the tears most full of life,  
suitable for the dead inside of you  
and the flesh that you rent for a while  
when eviction may be at the door.





*Ara cal viure*  
Maria Payá Escobar

## ARA CAL VIURE

Somnies un record de dones folles,  
astorades, que van alhora cridant-te,  
però no el nom proper, el que tens ara,  
sinó l'altre, el de la llum que un dia  
et varen amagar, el nom d'origen  
que desconeixes tu, el que retenen  
amb la llum que no tens i saps que és teua,  
i que la té potser empresonada  
algú que vol tornar-te-la... la resta  
l'has d'endevinar. Les dones parlen  
i no les pots entendre. De vegades  
són les dones del plor, les ploraneres,  
esperant el moment... (qui les envia?)  
Ara cal viure, no pensar. La fosca  
ja fa el que li pertoca: t'acompanya  
i potser amb un cert plaer d'amiga.  
Amb un desig caníbal de tornar-te  
al que deixares buit de temps en elles,  
les dones cerquen poder portar-te  
als territoris de la carn, que resten  
aire, flairor, pejjades de l'insomni,  
record que somnies, somni que oblida.  
Per si de cas, no intentes adormir-te  
amb la ira al costat, que potser elles  
l'augmenten bastant. Al tu que no ets de dia,  
has de protegir-lo amb el que encara et resta  
ara i avui, de voluntat de viure.

## NOW IT'S TIME TO LIVE

You dream a memory of mad and frenzied women, all calling out to you together, not by your proper name, the one you have now, but by the other, the name of the light that they one day hid from you, the original name that you do not know, the one they retain with the light you do not have and that you know is yours, imprisoned perhaps by someone who wants to give it back to you... the rest you have to guess. Women talk and you can't understand them. Sometimes they weep, those weeping women, waiting for the moment... (who sends them?) Now it's time to live, not to think. Darkness plays its appointed role: it keeps you company and maybe with a certain friendly pleasure. With a cannibalistic desire to swallow you into the void of time you left in them, the women attempt to transport you to territories of the flesh, with remnants of air, aromas, traces of insomnia, memories that you dream, the dream that forgets. Just in case, don't try to fall asleep with anger at your side. They might make it stronger. You have to protect what you are not by day with what still remains here and now, of your will to live.

## LA FLOR NONADA

A la tomba dels herois hi ha neu bruta,  
pega el sol, o plou, i un gat d'aqueixos  
que el cementeri té nodrit de rates  
i sargantanes fúnebres, li pixa  
llibertat. La processó naix i acaba  
quan comença el teu pànic a la bomba  
que el mateix Lucifer quasi lamenta  
haver confeccionat per aquest acte,  
amb residus de creus i amb les fogueres  
que fan més foc per als badalls dels bisbes  
que estan veient Joana d'Arc somriure  
mentre es crema amb ella la innocència.  
Arriben els teus passos que fugien  
i en acostar-se de bell nou, et troben  
vora l'estop d'algun semàfor que ara  
té un color més bonic, per on circula  
l'error més agraït. La flor nonada  
voldria dur-te a la flairor amb ella,  
però no sap si la llavor tancada  
voldrà permetre a temps deixar-la lliure  
i si tu encara hi estaràs per donar-li  
el teu ajut a ser la pau amb pètals.

## THE UNBORN FLOWER

The grave of the heroes is covered with dirty snow,  
or struck by the sun, or rained upon, and one of those cats  
that the cemetery feeds with rats  
and funereal lizards pisses on it  
freely. The procession begins and ends  
when your panic explodes at the bomb  
that Lucifer almost regrets  
having made for this act,  
with the remains of crosses and bonfires  
flaming more brightly with the yawns of bishops  
who watch as Joan of Arc smiles  
while her innocence is burnt quite away.  
Your fleeing footsteps arrive  
and when they approach again, they find you  
close to a traffic light in red,  
with a lovelier color now, around which circles  
the most grateful mistake. The unborn flower  
would like to take you to its scent,  
but it doesn't know if the sealed seed  
will let it be released in time  
or if you will still be there to give it your help  
to be the peace with petals.

## LA IRA QUE ES MOSSEGA LA CUA

I t'enutges amb tu...  
Tranquillitat, serenitat.  
Anem a veure, si potser, què passa.  
Un xicotet somriure?  
Concedeix-te la pau, si pots,  
no crides el dimoni que avui té massa feina:  
hi ha futbol  
i el futboler entusiasme  
el tindrà entretingut. Avui seria  
més oportú posar la roba bruta  
en remull, i esborrar les taques  
disposades a fer la resistència  
de l'obra d'art que no se sap entesa  
per pobra gent com tu... calma, silenci.  
No t'enutges amb tu, que vindrà l'àvia  
—aquella, aquelles que no vas conèixer—  
i no et durà coques amb mel  
i sí un rosari  
perquè pregues pels pares  
que cap oració, potser, retenen  
per quasi ateus i fluixos en matèria  
de santedat... Vinga, no plores,  
que la mar té massa aigua  
i no vol inundat el poble màgic on vius.

THE ANGER THAT BITES ITS TAIL

And you get angry with yourself...  
Tranquillity, serenity.  
Let's see, if we can, what happens.  
A little smile?  
Grant yourself peace, if you can.  
Don't call the devil; he has too much work today:  
there's a football match  
and the football frenzy  
will keep him entertained. Today it would be  
better to soak dirty clothes  
in soapy water, and root out the stains  
disposed to resist  
those works of art not understood  
by pitiful people like you... calmness, silence.  
Don't be angry with yourself. Your grandma will come  
—the one, the ones you didn't know—  
and instead of honey cakes  
she'll bring you a rosary  
to pray for your parents  
who most likely remember no prayer,  
since they're almost atheists and weak in matters  
of holiness... Come on, don't cry,  
the sea has too much water  
and doesn't want to inundate the magical town where you live.





*El que tu ets*  
Aitana Tinoco Castillo

## EL QUE TU ETS

La tempesta se'n torna a l'aigua fosca  
i la campana, endarrerida, enlaira  
intimitats que van al vent i fugen.  
La rosa pren color de la ferida  
amb por d'aqueixa sang que arriba als pètals  
recollint tots els crims que dona el dia  
per adornar la pau d'aquells que moren  
massa tranquils, potser sense adonar-se.  
El suïcida, des de dalt, calcula  
els passos a l'aire que li resten  
per arribar a l'iceberg que espera,  
i es decideix a desistir. Hi ha boira,  
i te'n vas, que tu no ets d'aquest desori.  
Has de tornar al punt aquell del límit  
que et malparí fa temps d'un plor i un riure  
que es varen conjuntar, contradictoris,  
per a dur-te a un aiguat de gota freda.  
Tu ets, i bé que ho saps —cal que ho recordes—  
conseqüència sòrdida dels éssers  
que saben recobrar, enllà a les fosques,  
els records que es van perdre sota l'aigua,  
com ets dels que són orfes del bell viure,  
dels que tenen la veu agenollada  
i van per lliure al cansament diari.  
I no et queixes si uns altres tenen massa  
de tot, que aqueixa càrrega excessiva  
tu no l'hauràs de suportar, i alhora  
pots caminar de cara al vent més lliure.

## WHAT YOU ARE

The storm returns to the darkened water  
and the belated bell raises  
intimate peals that rush into the wind and flee.  
The rose takes color from the wound  
in fear of the blood that reaches its petals  
gathering all of the crimes of the day  
to adorn the peace of those who die  
too calmly, perhaps without even knowing.  
From above, the suicide calculates  
the steps in the air he has left  
to reach the waiting iceberg,  
and decides to give up. It's foggy, and  
you leave, because you do not belong in this chaos.  
You have to go back to that borderline  
where you were ruined long ago with a sob and a laugh  
that were mixed, contradictory,  
to lead you to an autumn downpour.  
You are, and you well know—you have to remember—  
the sordid consequence of beings  
who know how to recover, in the darkness beyond,  
memories lost beneath the water,  
just as you are one of those orphans of the beautiful life,  
those whose voices kneel down  
and who go on their own to their daily fatigue.  
And you don't complain if others have a surfeit  
of everything. You won't have to bear  
that exorbitant burden, and what's more,  
you can walk in the face of the freest wind.





*Aprenent a udolar*  
Enrique Hernández Caravaca

## APRENENT A UDOLAR

La Sara et mira amb l'esforç que li nega  
assabentar-se del que dius. (Demostra  
que la debilitat que tens pels gossos  
lletjos i abandonats és cosa clara.)  
Ella es pensa que tu ets propietat seua  
puix que, quan va adoptar-te —tampoc ella  
sense cap prejudici estètic— llesta,  
va conèixer molt bé que el seu domini  
sobre tu no li anava a ser difícil.  
Li parles de la mar, on pren vacances  
el verd blavós que li cal, i on la cendra  
dels incendis del món sencer remulla  
els residus del foc. La gossa cerca  
els teus ulls, i com sempre que els regira,  
veu gossets prohibits, enllà a les nines  
reproduïts, i al teu costat escolta  
el soroll de la veu que parla penes,  
neguits i, de vegades —poques— frases  
d'un goig adormit, somnàmbul, feble.  
La mar, amb la color d'antics residus  
—li dius— que beu l'alé, la circumstància  
del formiguer humà, bullent, mullant-se,  
fent salts, lluitant, corrent espais d'arena  
on la pau és petxina inadvertida,  
no et recorda a tu, Sara, el gran desori  
del carrer amb vehicles que no tenen  
raó de ser tan enfollits i es creuen  
amb la gent que va a peu tallant el tràfec,

## LEARNING TO HOWL

Sara looks at you straining, aware  
that she cannot comprehend what you say. (Proof  
that you have a weakness  
for ugly and abandoned dogs.)  
She thinks you belong to her  
because when she adopted you—and not,  
clever as she is, without any aesthetic prejudice—  
she knew very well that her mastery  
over you would not be a problem.  
You tell her about the sea, where she takes  
the blue-green holidays she needs, and where the ashes  
of the fires of the entire world soak  
the remains of the flames. The dog looks into  
your eyes, and as always when she ponders them,  
she sees forbidden puppies, reproduced  
inside the pupils, and by your side, she hears  
the murmur of the voice that speaks sorrows,  
worries and sometimes—a very few—phrases  
of a drowsy, feeble, sleepwalking joy.  
The sea, the color of ancient waste  
—you tell her—drinks the breath, the circumstance  
of the human anthill, seething, drenching itself,  
leaping, wrestling, running along sandy spaces  
where peace is an unheeded seashell,  
doesn't it remind you, Sara, of the chaos  
of the street with cars that have no reason  
to be so deranged and swerve in front  
of people on foot, interrupting traffic

(gent incapaç de sentir la tendresa  
que la pressa refusa i assassina)?  
El carrer, gossa Sara, d'altres dies  
on anaves perduda, amb por i puces  
fent-te mal, fent-te òrfena, aïllada  
de tot l'amor del món, què t'oferia  
també a tu de la festa discontinua  
que ignora el que no siga la follia  
de brúixoles sens nord que els condueixen?  
Què sentia la pell teua eriçada  
per la por que duu mort a la gola?  
No vas perduda ja, ja no t'afilles  
al caliu del que passa, l'estrany ésser  
de qui tot depenia. Ja disposes  
de persona per usar. Amb ella mires  
el que tu no entens mai, com no entens ara,  
Sara amiga, el que et dic, el que et demane:  
vull aprendre a udolar, a plorar ira.  
L'endemà de matí, quan les gavines  
s'absenten cap al somni de les ones  
que han passat mala nit, i el sol intente  
la resplendor que no li cal, nosaltres  
a duo, udolarem. Tu pel que et manca,  
jo per la pèrdua constant i viva  
de mi mateixa, del ser minvant que em porta.  
Un udol té la força necessària  
per al que vull dir, el que jo tinc alhora:  
ràbia de gos, i por de gos, i ànsia  
de gos que deixa de ser gos, que intenta  
fer-se llop que li fa retrets frenètics  
a la lluna, on la mort més ballarina

(people unable to feel the tenderness  
that haste pushes away and kills)?  
The streets of days past, my Sara,  
where you were lost, afraid, and flea-  
bitten, making you an orphan,  
cut off from love in the world, what did they offer  
you, too, from the intermittent revelry  
that only knows the madness  
of broken compasses unable to lead them?  
What did your skin feel, bristling  
with the fear that death brings to the throat?  
You aren't lost any more, you no longer cling  
to the warmth of a passerby, a stranger  
on whom everything depended. Now you have  
a person to use. With her  
you see what you can never understand, as you don't understand,  
my friend, what I tell you now, what I ask of you:  
I want to learn to howl, to cry with anger.  
Tomorrow morning, when the seagulls  
fly toward the sleeping waves  
that had a bad night, and the sun strives  
to emit the glow it doesn't need, the two of us,  
together, will howl. You, for what you lack,  
and I, for the constant, living loss of myself,  
of the waning being that carries me.  
A howl has the necessary power  
for what I mean, for everything I have:  
a dog's rage, a dog's fear, and a dog's desire  
to stop being a dog, and try to become  
a wolf that makes frantic reproaches  
to the moon, where a frenziedly dancing death

amaga els seus fantasmes epilèptics...  
Udolarem i sostindrem la ira  
a l'altura del que és indiferència.  
Udolarem per la raó podrida  
i el sentiment que és un espill a trossos.  
Que arribe l'udol teu i meu, i se senta,  
negra Sara, a l'orella gegantina  
dels més grans buits i més enllà: que se senta.  
I els veïns que pensen —si volen fer-ho—  
que la mar es desperta esfereïda  
com un gos engabiat que vol ser lliure.

hides its epileptic ghosts...  
We will howl and hold our anger  
at the height of indifference.  
We will howl for putrid reason  
and the feeling that it's a shattered mirror.  
Let us howl together and be heard,  
black Sara, in the gigantic ear  
of the deepest voids and beyond: let our howls be heard.  
And let the neighbors think—if they wish—  
that the sea has awakened, as furious  
as a caged dog that wants to be free.





Maria Beneyto (València, 1920–2011) stands as one of the most significant Valencian writers of the 20th century. *Learning to Howl*, the English translation of forty-nine poems spanning her work from 1952 to 2003, introduces her remarkable Valencian voice to Anglophone readers. As Professor Candelas Gala observes in her introduction, the title—selected by translator Paul Scott Derrick—captures the very essence of Beneyto’s poetics. For her, “howling” becomes the necessary response to life’s betrayals: those imposed by sociopolitical and historical forces, by the distortions of language itself, and, ultimately, by the impenetrable wall of death.

