

Rogelio SAUNDERS
POEMS

The sadness of the dead writer

I am sad for those who knew me.
For those who knocked one night at my door, for them.
And for those who couldn't bear me in death
and now carry me, murmuring and saying goodbyes.
I'm going with them. Or, rather, they're taking me.
I don't leave them in peace, they've made me their own.
Now they have neither saliva nor reasons
not to let me die.
Like a street-lamp shining endlessly
on a corner
depriving the lamp-lighter of his light.
I'm sad for those who can't hate me,
who can't wake up from me or
go to a party.
These nights remind me how statues smell.
And naked women who wear around their necks
a chain of shadows,
a cold sweat.
I'm sad for everyone,
writing these final pages,
which are always the first.

You Would Be

The silver-tailed orphan wolf is fed up with howling its dog's destiny, its all-but-human toil at the foot of the pitiless pine. And now the hooded crow is in complete agreement with the rabid porcupine sinking its child-like claws in the dark of the earth. It's as if the sun were made of a bilious paper, as acidic and indestructible as all the nights without tenderness in the world. But the wolf and all the others keep the wheel turning, while the sullen satellite sets free its wormwood star and the mutilated well suckles the crows born in the quick of a wound.

Love is made of all creatures, all the inextricable plot twists and submerged dreams. Like a blind mailman it sings the coarse mesh of the dying day, the light that fell like a red stone on the mage's eye, and the adolescent's kiss, as sizzling as Faust's fire, which jolted the morning's torpid child like an electric serpent.

It's better that we don't know who we are. So we can kiss one another in blissful ignorance, our madness intact.

Disexile of Diogenes

I escaped
the interminable
cane fields,
and now gaze on
U-rope
from ancient parapets,
the endless green pastures
under which
no doubt
flow also
silence
forgetfulness
and blood.
Nothing ends
here where everything
in some way
has died.
There's an invisible people
beneath the rails.
Nocturnal songs
which rise
like will-o'-the-wisps.
Poetry's
fiery wake
is an enormous dead weight.
The unsonorous cadaver
that a pale assassin
drags along,
unworthy of the ancient
fierce
profession
of forester.
There's no axe
buried under the birches.
Above the indiscreet
luster of the landscape
the old watchword:
Tempus Fugit
flows like a marquee.
Ancient, empty
faces. Excavated
by a too sustained
anguish,
by a dream
too vast,
confused,
and sordid.
The dream of the heart

swollen
with romantic anxiety.
The crippled,
rambling I
of the sewers,
the irrepressible
shadow of nerval
with his unmasted
albatross-lobster,
strolling next to
a whistling chansonnier,
the last man standing,
haughty,
the girl-giant
at his feet
gorged with semen,
oh odd-numbered night of the
hecatomb,
of the tremendous blind bull
dancing asleep
in a downpour,
perplexed among the
barrels hiding
fat dietrich from her
tubercular, epicene
lover,
today more than ever
you are that,
you, the pond,
the glaucous clarity of the epidemic,
the yellow sun floating in
the muffled pupil of the
thick-nosed jew,
red against the lusterless window pane
of the bistro,
grandiose misunderstood
offspring of
forever posthumous
papa goriot
alone on the swift steppe
with its scab of ice
and indescribable
mouth
gaping
and mute
I know now that no one
will be able to tell us
who we are.
Anonymous and mute
we knock
sleepless elbows

at an imaginary bar
to the muffled hoofbeats
of horses
that don't exist either.
Everywhere holes
from howitzers
and the dubious sheen
of the sewers.
That dreadful stench
today worth nothing,
at the end of all the tragedies.
As if there had arrived,
inadvertently,
a final tragedy
of colossal dimensions
and incalculable
consequences.
Invisible tragedy.
Man's invisible
death,
changed into simile,
into pure, paltry
de-sign.
Into a clattering
brass circle
that rotates, laughing,
down the alley,
pursued by a mob
of numbers.
The huge face of the clown or
simple
jester
with invisible
stripes. Striped by the
held-back sun, walking
backwards
or desperately
fleeing
with all the
invisible others with
thirsty, anxious mouths,
mouths of guillaume,
faces sliced by a knife,
distended by dint
of forgetfulness,
by unimaginable
languidness
and drought,
and the dream
of the heartstrings,
with explosive burdens

fallen at awkward moments
and thunderous sidewalks
that move
toward the void,
carrying opaque implements
and punctured lists,
like
the artificial
remains of the day.
The birds
and the roses
electrocuted on the wires
bark at the cardboard-stone
moon, a discourse
without syllables.
Diogenes has returned
with a lantern
of black light.
Five idiotic
mechanical halberdiers
follow him,
devotees of sturlusson
and his futile
stammering on the steppe,
on the rippled zinc of great battles.
The art of the bards
has died in the lattice
of the cressets.
We won't bequeath anything
to our descendents.
We'll exalt to magi and sacrum
the imitation
of bacterias,
small and triumphant
as always
in the middle of
the pork-butchered
doppeluniversum.
The red thread guides us
through the dark woods.
But it too
will be dispensed with
in the wild instant
of liberty.
Those who must die
will die. And dis-appear.
That's how it is. That's
how it will be.
Now we have
the split-second gaze
of the rat

and the eternal odor
of the child suicides.
I gaze at the dawn
with my fake head
of bronze
and my completely round
eyes,
rectilinear spheres.
All the heroes have
died.
The tin-plate butterflies
fly with rabid iridescence
above the demolished
tomb of the comet-idol.
Its red, enormous laughter
with a black pen-stroke
moves the horrendous wave that runs
aground time after time on the same
solitary penduluminocity.
With incredible difficulty
the insomniac head starts
humming
quickly culminating
in a cadaverous
gulp.
The dream of the clinamen
has blank eyes.
The adolescent psychopomps
wet their pale fingers
in the startling whiteness
that powders the gleeful
skeletons.
Sleepwalking, the dance
is starting again.
The vertiginous triangle.
The green water and sinewy light
crisscross beneath the
enclosed impromptu.
The black fields reappear
at a distance
singing war and its grim
cardboard figures
stoned by the wind.
The silent pilgrims
file by, drunk in the dawn's black light.
With fixed eyes of clay
Diogenes watches the weary
silhouette of the tomb, and
the improbable arm that
divides the infinite sea
whose waves are ice.

He crosses his legs wrapped
in denim, and
drinks from the bottle
of the condemned men
with the glug-glug with which
lost dreams trickle away
through pipes of lead and cinnabar,
and the distant notes of the flute
of the glass maker,
scissors in hand,
as impassable as the thread
of ash
and cold doll's head
of the labyrinth.

English version: Michael Koch

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