

DAVID ANUAR

FROM THE COLLECTION OF POEMS

Someone plunge my head down

HORSE TEETH

i've been unable to walk
with my head upright
for centuries
of centuries
for days
in this grammar school
where they sharpen a pencil
with my horse teeth

the rails of a ghost train
that remind me:
tomorrow I will have to die
saluting the flag

i hide the edge of this headgear
behind books and desks
i break up class time with bathroom trips
i'm a full metal doodle
drawn by Susanna and Juan:
i'm the joke of the entire classroom

horse bridle they say

mommy

daddy

the dentist

is the name of this curse

a howl of pain doesn't stop

bite of wolf

laughter and chromosome

imperfect he tells me

born uneven

it doesn't end i tell myself

this locomotive with broken gums

parading my head around

TOADBOY

dust by my side
the laughter of the patio
and i don't know myself anymore

my eye is bloodshot

after a few days
i return to school
with gravel in my shoes

a sea of whispers
raging on the horizon

i collapse without falling:

hey one-eye they say
you one-eyed toad they call

Toadboy they sing
the entire school croaks
my pain
and I jump
during recess
little by little
my new name
an entertainment
in the slime of their asses

PURBLIND

i am

the opposite of a sharpened pencil

as if a boil

watched over the emptiness of things

filling its essence

with vapors

like Degas smoking

cigars in the iris

to see the world

breathing hoop skirts

SNELLEN

the letters decrease in size
and become a blur

she tells me at 30 my eyes will no longer grow
she changes the mica and asks for clarity

transparency and no more distortions she assures me

i step out with a pair of glasses that are not mine
and stumble each time with the world

i'm lost in this new progression

that threatens

to be

definitive

Translation from the Spanish by Miles Liss

FROM THE COLLECTION OF POEMS

Return to the native peninsula¹

GARDENING

Pulling the weed off the fresh grass
is as writing a poem.
You get your hands dirty,
you feel the thorns touch the surface of your skin,
and let the rain held by the leaves
seep in as necessary,
you let yourself be parted by the soil
without regard of consequences,
or of how deep the rocks may lay.

Once you have parted wheat from weeds
you must begin again
for another rain will fall
and weeds return
and the garden will always remain.

Translated from the Spanish by Fernando de la Cruz

POEMS PUBLISHED IN
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THERE ARE NO LOVE POEMS

There are no love poems tonight
only deserted ponds
where the murdered rest
from the violence of the living

There are no love poems tonight
just bonfires of bones
we lament with the cross
of shame and disgust

There are no love poems tonight
only this unhinging
we call Country

There are no love poems tonight
just the broken heart
broken people
broken blood
shattered
from one end
to the other

the hope
of ever writing
love poems
again.

SONNET BY GARCILASO DE GUERRERO

When I stop to contemplate my State
and look back at the paths we've taken,
how sad it is we've lost and erased them
and might not yet have reached the greatest evil.

Ayotzinapa, from the road I am not forgotten.
I write to record where I come from
and know I will end up like the 43 who are gone.
We will end up in dumps, ash and butchered bone.

Ayotzinapa, they delivered you without art—
the State that knew how to destroy and ruin you
if it so desired, and probably even craved:

then what will I fear but the massacre,
and the State, impartial to my cause
and capable, why will it refrain?

AFTER THE SEVENTH DAY, PARADISE

IN THE BEGINNING the sand forged the script of the coasts. Before man and his limits, the clast spirit burbled over the imagined face of Pangea, envisioning a mineral ocean of protozoa. The salt sketched continents and clashed with the sea, in the chalky back and forth of the shore.

THEY APPEARED OUT OF THE BLUE

like mahogany of another time

flowing down the unhurried Hondo River

they arrived to establish

woods of discord

with one voice they sowed hollows

blue mosaics of bathers

and the clarity of contained water

with one voice they exclaimed:

“Let there be swimming pools”

I COME FROM THE MEMORY OF A BANKER
of the thousand United States
and the republic of Adams
chicle bricks, illusions and a Decauville line³

I am a remnant of human weed
a migrant suffocated in the tides
ultimate Thule of opportunism . . .⁴

³ Decauville was a narrow-gauge steam engine that ran in the Yucatan from 1905-1932.

⁴ Ultimate Thule refers to the ancient concept of the farthest reaches known to man.

WE TEND TO COUNT THE FLOCKS OF WATER

in the come and go of crabs

then

the shimmer of their routes

schedules of memory

check-in and check-out

sea-time of our life

in a state of constant navigation

CUBE OR RECTANGULAR PRISM

testing geometry

of the journey and its repose

cube or rectangular prism

grafted between the clouds

and the root of sand

methodically grafted

on the back

of the snail and the seagull

methodically replicated

time and again

over the skin of the island

we have seen

emerging from the sea or sky

from the woods beyond the border

swarms of concrete

drifting

an arm of sand

fractured

HE BIT THE FRUIT⁵

our sown land

in a fish and fries dish

and he drank the shoals

with a golden cerveza smile

he screwed my wife

my mother

my mother's mother

all the spirits of the sand

oh girl!

oh boy!

oh whatever!

you know what I love!

and

my heart

mute with pyramids and stelas

nest of vipers splintered *by your lyrical voice*

closed its eyes and imagined there were dolphins, macaws,

crocodiles, jaguars, the night like obsidian, stars remembering glyphs

Oh, my pretty land-girl, where have we gone?

⁵ Italicized words in this fragment and the next one are in English in the original.

THE HANDS BUILT

the bar, the lobby, the *swimming pool*

the habitation

the work of my hunger

of a sleeping Sunday

break-king the waves

of your dollar lashes

wasn't it also written

in my heart

that you will rest one day

the wounds of your blood?

my hands are the *pleasure*

of your brothers and sisters

and I lie exhausted to clean

the bones of my father

the tomb of my sons

no one really cares

you has-been, *sweet song mumbled*

by the enormous department

of Human Corpses

and Material Resources:

in the seventh day

nothing really happened

and my ulcerated hands . . .

no one really cares

hun'

Translated from the Spanish by Susan Ayres