DAVID ANUAR

From the collection *Alguien hunde mi cabeza [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

Translated from the Spanish by Miles Liss
FROM THE COLLECTION [Return to the Native Peninsula]

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

*International Poetry Review*

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

ten 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 line

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

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

Note: 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