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### Swamp

Water in water in fog swamp joy investigations then you say of foods plants fish and your hands your breasts so sweet water in rain in clouds forests wetlands magnetized like lips toward the sweet fruit and joy the thing is with you flow words springs torrents silt in fertile fields summers water levels basins when you say basin a rare ocean form waves you are water moon brook so many possible forms of rain snake through your body so many infinite clouds in your laugh so many defined ways to inhabit the world in your hands rivers that feed evaporate and battle rivers nights howls nebulous waters in surprising forms sweetness in amber that doesn't cease to put bridges and points in their place water in water that flows in rebellion and tenderness in your eyes which open wide when you speak in the present and water in water you become a river a bird a goat and joy fruit so sweet water

*Translated from the Spanish by Andrew Adair*

## Metabolic Reactions

It's about communication: keennesses of ingeniousness and darkness and volatility and light: transformation producing sugars without contaminants or aftertastes.

A contaminant is a substance that exceeds threshold levels: which is to say, it was there, although everything has a limit; if outstripped, undesired events transpire, excesses in sugar, in carbon dioxide, in acids, in sulphur: sulphates excess water in the lungs we don't call it contamination, but it seems to be: floods dikes dams drowning towns: houses in the name of construction companies, extractive mining companies, excesses; in any case it's about clarification after the fact of putting things back in place and not just running for the hills every time.

[We're riding on the back of a she-wolf up the mountainside.]

Now I'm moving behind someone or something who's fleeing on the rapids that have surged in this city of uneven terrain: and it's not flowing it's just chasing and it's not about that anymore which is to say anguish. I'm left breathless: I'm just chasing a shape a presence that hurts me: a cell that's being left lifeless that's halting its biomolecular exchange and it hurts a lot.

Sulphates sulfides: how to reduce the impact of the excess poisons, in the words the things we said, what we ended up doing: an excess of spite and ill will, of frenzied imagination: we care more about the reality, the perception of what's there: this evening I see you this way in your cellular beauty and decipher the excess words, collect them, arrange them: beauty aboil: a junkyard: cars organized by color, by shape, by date, and by catastrophic events, occupying the place that corresponds to them: and I know that each and every one is a chance to embrace you, to calm, to clean the biosphere: I perceive your breath, remember your words, the shifting steps of your mad dashes: resisting and restraining in aquiferous blankets: extracting the contaminants the excesses and arranging them: may the beauty of their excess gleam and be transformed into something else close by or as far away as the date palms of Elche or the vacant lot next door: I think of you and the jasmine- harvesters I think of how you draw how you hold the pen or pencil how you illuminate an edge where you sketch shapes of leaves and fruit trees.

Then I perceive all the metabolic reactions of the billions of cells inside the she-wolf who nestles us onto our back and carries us up the mountainside. We breathe together and anguish is an animal that curls up next to us and sleeps.

## Rivers

Naming and controlling riverflows is the work of hydrologists, geologists, soldiers, and engineers who attend to convenient means of diverting riverbeds, enclosing them, draining them dry: so that they'll conform to flighty shapes and pipelines.

*Guadal* means river.

Guadalupe is the name for a river of wolves.

Can we imagine a river of wolves lacing through the mesetas and sheltering streams and creeks and communities of life communicating in a language that isn't the language of empire?

A river of wolves that wakes

and runs:

foreign to the language of empire.

A river of wolves that feeds and cleans the words and sentences and imperial notions I've uttered against my own lymphs and fluids: the words I've used to hurt, the words that ruptured bonds and tore at vines. I'm still trying to figure out how we might recover from this painful havoc.

I'm still searching for a river and a language flowing close and free: a vernacular language that will communicate and connect us to the vacant lot next door.

Speaking in wolves in molecules, understanding how chance interweaves us and offers us variables: attending to variability, photosynthesis, and the greenness of the air and leaves: recovering the clouds of our childhoods.

### **Aloe Vera**

Over eight years ago, on a rooftop terrace located nine point six kilometers from here, we found an abandoned aloe vera plant. We settled it into a pot and placed it on our windowsill at home.

Eight years ago in a Museum of Natural History located thirteen point nine kilometers from here, there was an exhibit, and you absently touched an incandescent bulb that illuminated a didactic panel on the particularities of the Mexican wolf. You burned yourself. We rushed to the infirmary at the Museum of Natural History and they took care of you.

Eight years and a few minutes after they took care of you at the infirmary, we rushed home. A leaf from the plant, *Aloe Barbadosis Miller*, placed half-split over your wound, eased the pain: no pustule or blister.

Eight years ago, we also learned how a Mexican government in the 1950s had proudly announced the extermination of the wolves: good news, it claimed, for the land and for farmers.

## Questions

Do we write poems to save the species?

We write poems and map routes to convey information that teaches us to follow joy as a vocation:

fireflies

luminous bacteria.

To nestle against the she-wolf's back on our journey up the mountainside. To stop is another way to flow.

**ALASKA**

An eighteen-wheeler drones up Avenida Insurgentes, honking like a ship horn. We glance at each other:

from prow to stern from  
port to starboard  
we make plans: Anchorage, Kodiak Island,

we board with the fishing licence in force: we trawl for herring and  
salmon, we roam, we drink

we set sail

though just from the bus to the subway, you to your house, me to mine and  
salmonless.

## POEM IN WHICH THE BEAUTUS ILLE IS RESUMED

What do I know, but me, today, not even my dead

with Mahler and everything, not even Pearl Jam, not even the blessed luck  
of living in an apartment with no inner outer garden  
---not even a little plant, you know, or palms or succulents--- just  
pastures;  
I can't affix the image, the heraldry of everything: for example, sugar  
factories, nothing unsweetened---a tiny cube.  
We knew the sugar would revolt,

we'll have to cook up proteins, carbohydrates, synthetic semen;  
fermented sugar: alcohol -OH;  
that said, I don't understand chemistry or biology,

no one drew gold from rocks, let alone eternal life, bless them! I  
lose my teeth, my hair:  
nails grow (ingrown) over the years... as  
for the the believe-it-or-not-sirs:

a man from India or Pakistan or Almería (exotic modernist places) stopped  
cutting his nails and so his women did everything, even pulling up his  
underwear:

forty-two centimeters of calcium and years and years and years of sacrifice

so that his nails would grow tangentially;

if that's how breasts grew, we'd all be Dolly Parton, imagine!; breasts  
like melons (*melus-mellitus*), again the sweetness, ballads Daphnis  
and Chloe picking summer melons,  
though breasts stop growing at eighteen,

unless you gestate and you never nurse, but they hang down like a  
telephone cord (I'll call you) or a hanged man's rope.  
In the end, we're not eternal:

let's enjoy April and May, because August is on its way, one  
swallow doesn't make a summer, breasts don't grow and  
nails don't, either, believe it or not...  
we shall be dust, and at this rate ---dust in love?, who knows; perhaps  
enormous breasts that celluloid consecrates, Malherian cymbals, what  
else?,  
sugar dissolves,

it wrecks your teeth and arteries,

hence the factories, and they'll only pay your hours straining in the fields, let's  
strain sweet summer words,  
ferment until they burn -OH, and too my dead,  
*scripta manent*, everything combusts, bodies rot  
and disappear,  
hair, nails,

dust dust nothing

*Translated from the Spanish by Robin Myers*

*Kilimanjaro*

Cranks, pillow blocks, levers—  
pregnant slopes—ball bearings, arrows,  
levies: rumor and movement—  
impulse—that is called a who knows  
what, that lisps— love—controllers,  
gears, bolts, cables, screws, particles  
and blooming; chains, belts, pulleys,  
growths and superposition of bodies;  
cylinders, pistons, connecting rods,  
valves, suction pads—quick contact of  
skins—: machines machineries, rumor  
and movement—we said who knows  
what and the gloomy aroma of  
rosewood was: stretchers, motor and  
machine: movements, what is called  
impulse: gusts and pores perspiring:  
transfer, translation, transliteration,  
transhumant,  
transatlantic, transfugitive, train in  
motion, train inside: steam and  
machine: like a beloved in a lover one in  
another dwells: beginnings, starting  
torque: a dot is a particle that pioneers  
the journey: the dot is a face of the line:  
its side; dot, line, surfaces, beginnings  
and papers— sweet rumor of your body  
with mine, in full swing—pioneering,  
journey: just to say something—parallel  
lines, successions that they  
imaginatively recognize one another on  
an imaginary horizon where  
imaginatively a dot we are: something  
like that: we said: cogs

couplings: someone murmurs dovetail  
 and the locomotive in motion: to go by  
 train is an exit, to go by train is an  
 entrance— surfaces—to go by train  
 urges oneself to be the track, to thread  
 oneself like a bolt, to rivet oneself— like  
 you used to say it was—papers you  
 used to say: papers without fleas or  
 nooks, papers, outlines, notebooks:

A machine is a combo of  
 bodies—malleable—resistance fighters  
 ready in such a way that through—*liras*  
*dobles que el amor enrama*—them  
 they can fulfill nature's  
 forces—shaky rowboat— mechanics to  
 produce some effect or work—clear  
 river—accompanied by certain  
 determined movements—  
 sometimes nightingale sometimes  
 branch: a machine is a device, a  
 machine is an illusion, a tumble and  
 ensemble of parts interposed between  
 the force and the work: clear river with  
 the objective of adapting one to  
 another—transformation and  
 resistance: gloom and flame— sweet  
 rumor in movement: the wave and  
 its dissemination  
 wavelengths: vibration—that is  
 called music and question:

Asking leads to Rome— what  
 did you say your name is?— Echoes and  
 repetitions: the life that goes with its  
 counterpart— confusion and  
 ambiguity— recurrences: going along  
 like a run

in pantyhose, g like the leaves going  
along in puddles after a storm: to be the  
water and the leaf and the nervation  
and the horizon: to sense holes,  
interstices, to scratch one's fleas with  
one's own hands and from these in the  
stone pestle do not jump: but fleas  
upon fleas, upon the immensely  
minimal and absurd: circus; the great  
circus of the world or theater or  
uncertainty of the leaps of the flea up in  
the air, of the lightweight *livia* flea,  
from a flea in businesswoman at the  
marquee in ruin of a species that lost its  
north and the hardness of the materials  
that does not concur with the hardness  
of the rails or wheels or sleepers:

Machine, flukes, tumbles,  
nonspecific choices: sleeping wheels  
and the hardness of the materials in the  
notebook owned by a surveyor who  
only writes lines who only goes along in  
successions of dots that go: looks like  
they to go toward some side, looks like  
they head from one side to another,  
looks like it; and they trace lines and the  
hardness of the materials: rails: straight  
lines, parallel,  
perpendicular, mixed: lines broken—  
how lovely the word perpendicular:  
looks like anything would hang from it:  
a love or a maxim—: perpendicular is  
the line where two cross forming four  
right angles: what is right, the right  
ones will never be as gorgeous as the

perpendicular ones: drunken palm tree,  
crosstree: palm tree; pierced against  
the horizontal sand—quick contact of  
skins—or lost palm in some garden in  
any city where the hardness of the  
materials does not coincide: also  
vertical and perpendicular death falls as  
a gorgeous reaper strictly when the  
heart quietly says: stop—but it doesn't  
always occur and it forces itself: the  
lines trim, they pervert to fall mixed:  
broken, bone breakdown:  
electrocardiogram rays that force  
themselves to be something they are  
not—dots in succession and then: they  
are called transplants, they are called  
rescuers, pacemakers, and scientific  
advances accessible for some, because  
then, no: death is not that which only  
said they maketh: lines, ellipses and the  
hardness of the materials; and what is  
done to it, because death also comes  
from lines and headaches of skulls that  
rotate and trip on something called  
business or family or for all you know  
which name of the tavern: my office, the  
parish, the headquarter and then the  
names of death: called bazookas, called  
AK- 47s, called AKs, called I do not give a  
damn and you're already screwed by the  
motherfucker son of a bitch: lines in  
loop, crowded lines, torrential lines of  
impropriety, that follow each other,  
lines in flight, for you have no idea  
where they stop— and if they don't  
stop, and there's

nothing to hold them back and that is called course: the course and the surveyor's notebook and the lack of control of the hardness of the materials: the course and the compass and framing square and pencil and half-asleepness papers and arm and elbow and fingers and nails and surveyor and drawing; papers without bedbugs or fleas or burrows snazzy and unfocused papers on a drafting table immaculate papers in hope of being depicted papers:

Hard cash papers, papers with faces, identity papers, papers password safeguards—  
transformation and resistance—  
standard papers—buzz and music—  
your documents identify yourself and what did you say your name is? called fugitive, called migrant, called emperor, executioner, jailor, prisoner, redeemer, motorman, passenger, who's in charge of the event? what did you say your name is?: the cop relaxed: a passenger without documents, discredited passenger, defenseless: passenger in flight: telltale worried about bars with everything and all; hard cash papers: certificates, records, documents: Rancho Alegre, aka Merry Ranch, one hundred eighteen cows produce ten thousand liters of milk per year and they do not tire or ask for maternity leave, rather on the contrary: pretty,

made-up, dairy and pleased cows with names like Micaela or Magnolia birth and produce milk, cows: cows, records of my cows of my days: merry records, papers the record of the ranch that produces milk and from the vestige that produces meat: cannon fodder, fugitives without name or records or papers, they do not appear on certificates; they are called migrants in containers, trains that transport liters of milk and men without a first name or job or surname: men birthed not by pleased cows, but rather by mothers who have no names—merry mothers who are not called magnolias or micaeleas or anything else—mothers who distance themselves from their children and do not produce liters of milk per year and do not live in merry ranches: mothers without records or papers: fugitive mothers and children. cracks like flares toward the inner dream: imaginary merry dreams where cows are milked hard cash and merry: cows specialized in producing high amounts of milk and men on trains that penetrate the night and they milk it: passenger motorman train and tracks in motion by a dairy track infinitely spilled by the one hundred eighteen cows from Merry Ranch: machines minute throbbing—cog and suspension—cows: cows spill milk, they moooooo by the dairy track and they drip  
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