

Actio fructus

For Tereza Tenorio

What matters about a poem is writing it – publishing it is losing it – allowing that the imbeciles graze it, like pearls ruminated by swines; or that the ignorant critics on the papers detract it, even when they praise it. And that those from the University torture it, cooking it in the insipid spices of scientific stupidity, saying nonsenses of much more credoibility. When I write a poem I just write it, without cogitating whether it will be good or whether it will please somebody. Does the avocado tree worry with the quality of its fruits, by chance, some sweeter some less, some riper, others not.. If I be a poet, I shall yield poetry as the avocado tree yields avocados. If, some day, attracted by my fruit, someone wants to taste them, may he take advantage of them – if he likes them or not, the tree will go on producing them, peel, pulp and seed, that one can always plant – and there will always be guavas, tangerines, yellow mombins, hog plums, apples and the difficult nectarines, for those who love their flavor. The avocado tree will continue to yield avocados and I, my verses, and I will never worry about the destiny they might have. However, if my poems shall be published, I don't want to be around to see them maltreated by the swines eyes, chewing my pearls, fruits that came out of me, without my even wanting them.

Full moon

The distance barks on the corners
of the city shut in swoon
while it shines on the sidewalks
an indifferent moon.

Is it March or September.?
Is it Monday or Thursday.?
Do I forget or remember..?
Do I tell the truth or lie..?

The sun, in the city, lingers.
The silent moon makes a halt,
scattering light from high
above the blackness of the asphalt.

Catharsis

I shall not bow
To the language of my time.

I shall float over the garbage,
remains of anguish, gluttony, despair
and chaos (without losing pity
though), I shall emerge
in search for air; for air, for light
for the peace of understanding
what to lose; what to rescue for myself.

No, I shall not set out
among dejecta.
I shall not detain myself before the ruins.

I shall follow my way; and gather
firewood – I must light the fire;
shatter the mirror;
wipe off the tears –
purify the language of my time.

Illud

I feel nothing when I write.
I don't mind, if they had said it. It is
true. And I feel, when I
write, that I do not feel.
But the verse feels.

And those who read,
will feel, if they love good poetry
and if they happen to feel. Or if
they feel well, before
or after lunch,
on a broad porch of Sunday.

I remain cold
so that the words can
heat other ears, other eyes. Another
mind may be able to feel (and will
think that feels) what I write,
sometimes, even because I have nothing to do.
Never moved by any kind of feeling.

Intention of Autumn

I wish I could understand Fall,
so many and diverse yellows,
falling and carpeting the ground.
Easy is Summer,
its spectacle of sun over blue.
and Spring with its garlands
of feverish bromelias; of acacias
and wild orchids.

I wish I could understand Fall,
its yellows that fall;
its intention of, by and by, advancing
towards snow – winter
and its lead horizon.

Little ray of light

Just yesterday, I entered unwillingly
that cheap (but clean and tidy) pension
where we used to meet happily almost
every early evening. Unwillingly, I swear.
I was looking for some car part in one of
those shops by the train station. When
I realized I was exactly at the door.
How could one resist.?

In the furtive twilight of the hallway,
my heart skipped the tracts to room
17 that awaited me silent as are eternal
truth. Everything the same. The bed
immaculately white; a night table; two
old straw chairs; and the pink porcelain
basin where you washed up after, concealing
your gesture bashfully, your aura of goddess
profaned in this prosaic intimacy.

How many times this modesty in the path
of our promiscuity excited me, I held you
from behind and brought you back to the
tempest of bed. You always resisted. Are
you crazy, boy.? He gets home early from
work. Behold that little ray of light on
the Persian blind as it crawls, sneaking
towards night. Yet, you resisted with
hesitant resisting, actually desiring
rather to deliver yourself,
that second time with much more voluptuousness.

The love you make after making love

Is much more love, you whispered one day, lowering your eyes, with that shy and ashamed way of doing everything and saying nothing that you always showed. It was on one of those days when we felt earth shake under us and thought it was the train. And there was the little ray of light crawling on the Persian blinds, about to engender night. I don't know whether it was he; whether it was me or what it was. No one knows women's logics.

We haven't seen each other for a long time. Last one was on the street, by chance. You didn't even accept my invitation to sit at a table for a drink and for talking. It was in the early evening. You showed to be in a hurry. Whatever we have to talk, we can talk here, standing. Say it, boy. I tried to revive our moments of splendor in my staggering words; to darn the slashes of past in a delirium quilt. You listened in silence and at the end said. It is over, boy, it has passed, forget it. With a didactic smile and never yours.

With a worried air, you looked at your watch and left, without saying good-bye, stepping on clouds with a short and fast step. I saw one person yet it was another person. In the immovable room of the cheap pension, the little ray of light drew lazily the passage of the small hours of early evening, recurrent indifference of everything. Blue signet of eternity.

Madonna of the Sins

I dot not worship thee
Madonna of the Sins,
but my sins.
For them, I had thee; and in them.
For them, I saw thee in Raphael
Murilo
Angelico
Tintoretto

in thy arms a bawdy boy.
Madonna of the Sins, thou art,
Madonna of my Sins, thou art,
my sins, thou art,
my suns.

My time

There is no exact time, there is my watch
which reminds me with its tic-toc
there is a life
we have to live
there was a life
we did not live.
who cares if a raving radio roars
it is some hours and some minute,
official time..
After all
what is official in my life..
Only,
breaking the definite peace of all this space
taking me ahead with no return,
Tick-tocking all my be and my will be,
there is my watch,
phony pulse,
sensible soliloquy slow and sure
that sings
the song
of a time
which is mine.

Ode to silence

I dressed silence with your face.

Before the passing hours,
I became less lonely
but I became sadder.

Just while constructing
your absence,
could I understand
what it consists of.

I do not care what you
are or are not
but so much you were
that still stays,
decorating silence.

The words recreate you
from the untouchable bottom of past
like a moving silhouette

Remainsr

There are remains of night around the streets
that are becoming mist and early morning.

There are remains of unavoided tedium
that are dissolving in the slender dawn.

There are remains of dream at every step
that went before were true and are no more.

There are remains of yesterday on sidewalks
that was a day of feast and fantasy.

There are remains of me in every place
that I could never be entirely.

Song of the Girl in Botafogo Clinic

There is a girl standing
on the heights of the balcony
in Botafogo Clinic;
immovable, she stares into the distance,
knowing not at what she stares.

There is no moon, there is nothing,
nor the sea, down, in reflexion:
standing alone in silence,
she has no haste, no route;
she just stares at the emptiness,
the distance she does not see.

What will the girl's thoughts be
I know not, but I know mine
when I look up at the girl,
so beautiful, so immovable,
standing still on the balcony,
staring at the long emptiness.

I think, down here where I am,
I cannot address the girl.
she is young, she is pretty
but possesses none of her head
which she has well possessed
by some doctor in the Clinic.

I pass on the street and think
the emotion of seeing the girl,
of knowing that far from her
is her time and is her memory,
that the balcony is her memory,
that the balcony is her world.
her exiguous universe.

I feel sad and isolated
when I pass down on the street,
taking away in my eyes
the fixed nature of her eyes,
lost and empty, lost and dead,
just like the strayed eyes
in the women of Del Vaux.

Sometimes, I have come to thinking
that it is I and it's not she
who is looking from my window
and is imagining her figure,
I, myself, in my apartment,
she , herself, inside my thought,
both of us in the same tumult.

Sphinx Deciphered

Devour me. Devour me, please,
Sphinx – I implore you. In the
concave convex of your stone
eyes, you made me a prey, in
prison, inert, alone, you
turned me and returned me to
dust, to pure pollen. Placid
cows subtly graze in the
perfumed pastures of my dreams.
Feverish hummingbirds hover
in the air. When you wake up
at sunrise, woman with a lion
body and a stone face, you
shall always have me by you,
rubbing my warm skin on your
marble fragility, eagle wings
shall not raise you from the
ground. The field resembles
a chessboard of anamnoses
yet there are bushes, just
bushes. Nothing that I dreamed
of. What do I know about
life.. Tell me. I won't take
no for an answer or any
trifle. Living is knowing..
The beavers know the birch

trunks in order to accept
the thawing and gnawing up
spring. The bees perpetrate
minutely their new alveolus
in their antiquity of honey.

I shall then say, mistress of
mystery, that I know nothing
but my role. Nor is it necessary.
To accept all and to accept that
all is uncouth. All remains to be
done. And that all, some day, will
be over. Just, the estate of my
dreams remain. For that reason,
mistress of vigil, you who
dominate the desert with the
infinitude of your stone look,
i implore you – devour me.
Devour me that only thus I
shall be able to decipher you.
To decipher me.

Static ode

Look, Denise, if you go to the past,
years forty, in the backlands,
you shall be with me and with you
in that colloquium that I shall never forget.
If I deserve it, we shall be together in the backyard.
Do you remember the high wall covered with ivy..
Near which played in lazy hours.. Do you remember.
The rose, dahlia and yellow daisy beds..
The shadows in the afternoon, obeying the roofs and cornices,
traced unpredicted forms on the cement pavement –
you used to show me those drawings
that you would describe in contours
of intense fantasy. Like the round clouds
in the ever-blue skies of the backlands.
The word was calm. Time was slow. I remember
the wind whipping the small leaves of a tall tree.
Do you remember it too.? I see all this like in a photograph, Do
you see it?
All arranged as though we were posing
for the camera our innermost reflexes,
subtle eyes of our feeling
(they reach farther than a telescope).
I prefer to believe that you remember.
I don't know where you might be,
maybe married to Dr. So and So, rich, fat;

maybe adulterous or playing piano the whole afternoon like a saint. It doesn't matter. It matters that in some cell in your brain all these things must be registered and, for some reason, they will emerge from the unconscious even if I have to become famous and my verse run throughout the world. You shall remember, then – as I do – that shy boy: you used to tell me I was handsome; you would even pat my hair; but I remained timid. The first time we kissed, hiding behind a bulky mango tree trunk, it was you, Denise, who took the initiative, pressing your lips against mine, nothing more than a light rubbing of our two curious skins and my guilty consciousness so sinfully afflicted me that Sunday on the church, I told everything to the priest. You didn't confess your sins out of modesty – you told me that with a subtle smile – as yours were. But our hushed kiss opened way to caravels on the seas of senses; discoveries of smells and tastes; of tact and contacts; of visions. All hidden. Do you remember?. The exquisite flavor of complicity and secrecy.. The ignorant world defeated in a simple exchange of glances. Your mother in the living room, knitting ingenuity and the two of us in the sewing room behind the curtains, our hearts throbbing of fear and emotion. You, a little older than I, you spurred my advances into secret territories where a coveted treasure hid, jewels of strange name. And you corresponded with caresses that I never imagined. More than I, you wanted everything that this occult universe offered us. You did not fear the fears feared by fearful women. You desired all the mysteries and surprises we plucked in the

blue twilight of that sewing room. Your mother napping.
You were almost twelve. Eleven, was I. I don't know
what devil possessed me. I asked, you denied,
first with modesty, then coyness. Nervously, I insisted with,
entreaties,
suplications, and by and by, you rested silent,
without answering me. With a boldness that
I never suspected, I went sweetly and slowly
mobilizing flaps and buttons – she didn't
resist – as somehow I hoped. Suddenly, the spell
was cast – Oh – It was fascination: I wanted
to cry, she shut my mouth. Ah, on that day an
era began. Ah, on that day I discovered a world.
From the pointed summits of your breasts
to the arched hills of your back, down to the
soft plumes of your valley, all bathed by the
bluish twilight on the lusty setting of
sewing room – a real picture by Velasquez
if Velasquez ever painted naked girls.
Therefore, if you ever go to the past, my Denise
of then, years forty, in the bapland, that
always spoke louder in me than capital, if you
go there, as I hope, renew our vows that are
already eternal; embrace me and kiss me behind that
mango tree; take me by the hand to the sewing room
and remain naked, nailed in the distance
of the brief accidents, of the sweet smells,
in the immovable vision of your tender body
that is the absent body in which I search for you
in all roads, all around the world, in all women.

The Centaur

Unhappy,
cannot be just a horse.
He has a head that thinks
and hooves for his attacks.

Unhappy,
he cannot have
Tranquility in the fields.
Running free from his skull
that weighs on him that guides him
that makes him

half-human,
responsible percentage,
fifty certain percent
of mankind's insanity.

The drunken boat
For Luis Angelico

He showed his friend the poem
and said, with adolescent certainty,
that no one in France could do
Better, in that golden age.

(And, probably, he was right)

then he changed his weapons; changed
his line. He got himself a woman
and consumed himself
like the sparkling hibiscus flower
that lasts one day, withers, and falls to the ground.

(There are things too big for eighteen).

The small wee hours

It is in the small hours, in the small wee hours,
Beginning and ending each day,
that your image, more vibrantly,
comes to me, a dream in color,
ransom of a past lost in splendor.

The day races by, strife grows,
tomorrow's invisible petards
Cross-sea and air –
they are armed today and fired today
over the noise and smoke
of a city assaulted
by fear and sacrifice.

Just in the small, hours, in the small wee hours,
your image vibrates and makes me tremble.

UnchristmasPoem

It shall also be Christmas in Kabul
when the day comes. But it doesn't
matter. It shall be Christmas. Hunger
and misery shall proceed their manger.
It doesn't matter. It shall be Christmas.
Solitude shall be solitary alone and
solitary. Solitude shall be all but solidary.
But it shall be Christmas.

In Portugal in Brazil.
In Greenland in Thailand.
In Nigeria in Liberia.
In the Soviet Disunion.
In North America paranoia.
In Latin America ingenuity.
In German prosperity.
In Nipponic voracity.
In Britannic imperation.
In the terror of the gulf.

And, in the supreme horror of the land where the boy was born
crackers crackle in the air,
other comets tear the skies,
machine guns rattle,
bullets whistle.

And in every milimitar of the sacred soil
a bomb explodes,
in comemoration for the dead in Bethlehem.

In truth, there has not been left
here one stone upon another,
nor there shall be left any.

When the fish scatter in the sea,
very hardly do they swimm backwards.
The whell wheels backward and behold
the hour of Aquarius. Of the Holy Ghost. Huah.
Of all . And it shall always be
Christm confluences in all parts of this agreable
planet, even in those where
the boys from Liverpool
are better known than the boy from, Nazareth.

It shall be Christmas. A boy shall
be born. And in him, by him, with him,
all boys that there have been, there are,
and there will be shall be born. A boy
shall be born, firm determination of
going ahead. He came from far. From
darkness. From where, no one knows.
Nor where to. He was born. He saw.
He vanquished. He vanquished the
saber-tooth-tiger. He vanquished ice.Flood.
Earthquake. Volcano, Cyclon. He vanquished
the seas, the airs, the night. He vanquished
the other one. He even vanquished himself
(without constancy though). But he fought

against his certainties, the same
certainties as nourished his ignorance,
his fear. And vanquished them Vanquished
fear when it was imperative and necessary.
He came from far, from darkness, this
boy, this girl, come to wipe his tears.
To tell him what nobody dares tell.
To give him her lap, her Sex, her
blessed uterus, her plentiful breast.
And the right slap at the time
of the wrong mischief.
Boy and girl He has created them.
And they are born everyday in an Everlasting Christmas. They
are born.
They see and vanquish, in one more step
of the adventure that began when a
creature came out of the sea, attracted
by the moon, and crawled on the beach –
a periple by the stars of boys and girls
who are born everyday
in na uninterrupted Christmas. Amen.

Ut floreas

There are those who bend the poem before the reader.
I write it as it comes: a fruit, a colt,
a river, a jungle; I write it
with no thoughts – the success of the words
does not depend on me; nor is it
a simple problem of carpentry.

If the poem can balance on its legs
with some elegance; if it is really
a plant; an animal, even a discreet
creek, it is all right –
they shall read it, and then, they shall love it or not.

Only money pleases everybody.
What shall I do
if they cannot understand my poem..

Sometimes, even I myself cannot understand it.

Photopoem

A poem like a photo
as the image of a poem,
a photo made up of words
to begin the exposition,
to be a fantasy of words
made to imagine the theme,
an image of fantasy
conceived in the depth of the camera
that can conceive the image,
giving birth to a person,
for the camera is a uterus
and the uterus takes a picture
of flesh from a human being.

A poem like a person
that reveals love and hatred
that has saliva and sweat;
that has joy and has sadness

that weeps, that laughs;
that screams, that curses;
for the camera to capture
with the uterus in hand,
without ideas in the head.
The woman possesses the uterus.
She knows more about the images.
From conceptio to birth,
she gets pregnant from light –
with the camera in her hand.

A poem for the birth
of light that engenders light –
the woman thinks inwardly;
men think outwardly
and have too many ideas.

And so they can never feel
how sublime is getting pregnant
conceiving and having birth,
inventing a human being
and revealing him to the world.
Uterus, camera, uterus,
the woman is more herself
with a camera in her hand,
with a man into her arms,

gives birth to the photo, the fact the being

Normal Ode

Poetry is ordered madness.
Never just madness. Its chaotic discourse.
Its anarchic design. Convulse geography
of ignorance and despair. Its vertiginous
encubrations about all absurdities.
Its grotesque embrace. Its living room
decorated with rococo excrescences.
Its Horror, its Wrath, its Distemper, Its Beheading.

Its time that unbridles itself in the feverish
strings of celoes out of tune.
Its constant, deaf, pertinacious, treacherous and laborious
escalate towards the snowy peaks of Power,
from where she excretes Omnipotence,
urinates gall and commands with her right hand
those who, in trance, with their tousled hair,
loosen in the fields and seas
the Horses of Fear and Terror.
Sinister maiden, cringing in her eyes
the projects, symbols and instruments of Devastation.
Hail Madness! Hail Insanity! Hail all ways
that have stiffened themselves to transform Nature
into Unreason, that moment when Madness sees reason
in her mirror and immediately opens the Dictionary,
thinking that she will find Poetry
like a cuckoo's egg in a hummingbird's nest.
I speak about Madness and her twinner and stronger brethren,
the whims of Reason.
Never about the mind affections
identified by the psychiatrists
that know, with few exceptions, how to tame them with alcohol
or extremely simple salts, Maybe
I speak about the psychiatrists, themselves, excited
about the possibility of understanding the limbic lobe
chemically; frustrated because they cannot
contradict the free will
of desoxi-ribo-nucleic acid
with the scientific Omnipotence of XIX Century
which nourishes itself somberly
in the ingenuity of Kaput while it repeals it.
They are, the haughty psychiatrists,
those who desire furtively that all of us have
our liver in the brain
so that they can give us shots of hepatica

that would be useless
but at least would not have any side effects.
Hail, Hail, three times Hail
these diligent Priests of Madness,
in their left hand a hypodermic syringe
in their right hand a Pharmacology treatise,
as if the human being were but
this physic-bio-chemical tangling they don't
understand or a simple desire machine
as some other will. All this is Madness.
With Madness one can do psychiatry
and live very well out of it.
But nobody can write poetry just with Madness. Nor
with Insanity. Even less with Reason.
Marching in an inexorable straight line,
from where nor even Death can deviate her, like the
wounded buffalo. Nothing is straight.
Choose the straight line and at most you shall
be a concrete poet, even so, in lower case,
to use their codes against them
those serpents they have raised
and that bite them today and they don't notice them
Redundance sometimes is not a fault,
a famous German advertising man would say,
or never is – it convinces, it soothes, it refreshes, it revivifies

Everything that I can say. I lack
a good memory for numbers and names,
and folks only believe
in those who can manipulate numbers and names. I, myself,
never told the story of that Zen philosopher
who published a book in the West
With a clarifying preface by Jung
and gave an interview in the papers of the times,
saying that Jung understood nothing of Zen.

Who does.. Me.. Not me. I don't understand other things, and even less Zen Buddhism. Imagine. Poor me, who, when I'm hungry, I worry about carbon hydrates just because I don't want to become plumpy like those oriental monks who become a millionaire in the United States preaching abstinence of material goods and of all kind of meat while his disciples retribute by initiating him in the supreme delight of Swiss chocolate and of strawberry cheese cake. Poor me who when I'm, thirsty, I drink Brazilian or Chilean white wine – cursing my pocket because I cannot drink a Chateau Laffite, 1972. Poor me who, who when I feel like writing a poem, I have to give literature classes in some federal university that doesn't even know if it exists. Literature classes. As if anyone could, in fact, give literature classes. Not even to justify the existence of baroque in Bahia. But listen, before I could not remember the ingenious Zen philosopher's name. But it's like that. Even Freud explained nothing. Jung, himself, Freud never wanted to understand and incinerated him at the light of scientific prejudices which are execrated By science today, the same he did with Reich Who ended up with nowhere to go. He died alone, exiled in himself. Like all geniuses. Freud explains nothing. No one did. Nor even those who forged sparkling metaphors on top of Freud's hurried, sometimes frivolous conclusions. Those who elaborated better his thought and made poetry out of it he simply disdained. "I am sorry, Monsieur Breton

but I understand nothing of literature. I am
a scientist. I also see you boys do not
understand my concept of the Unconscious.”
And now.? What shall become of million of words
dancing in the paper.? What shall become of millions
of canvas hanging before our eyes.? And everything
else.? What shall become of all thisAnd it was exactly this?
thinker, stationed in
Viena that tried to cover the holes of human soul.
Can you understand.. Or is it really Surrealism..
To me, it is just a small chapter in the novel
of the Absurd. Nobody explains nothing.
There is nothing to explain. Things
are what they are. It is convenient to say,
however, that I am just a peasant of literature
and never meant any harm to anyone. Even
when I pinch the sometimes-sensitive skin
of some High Priest of Madness. I always
wished to write poetry, organizing
All the chaos that I already found
when I came, unwary, to this blue planet
that I love as few do, thus organizing
my interior chaos. This is the best I
have made of mine and everybody’s Madness,
fruit of my imagination and anxiety.
The carnivorous flower for these verses.