

Crete Burns

I

The cicadas have crossed the sound barrier,
my voice bursts and the power of the wind hauls
my soul through the length of Samaria Gorge.
My head, Orpheus, broken,
metamorphosis of rock, my head, Orpheus.
The punishment was not looking back.
I see my medusa fury along the Gorge,
my soul running, escaping with swift speed
through the labyrinth. Crete, labyrinth at ten years of age,
the wind took away my soul in Samaria Gorge,
the inner world scattering along the way, gorge,
labyrinth, my head disintegrated, swift speed
towards the bottom of the sea.
Orpheus, your head is now my rock
my beach Son Saura, peacefulness of colors inspiring the eyes.

II

August of 96, twelve hours walking,
twelve pursuing what was left of me in the Mall,
Washington, labyrinth of art galleries,
I search, I search for myself, for you Füssli and Odilon Redon,
they all belong to us now,
through the labyrinth of galleries I go, searching for the butterfly.

III

Chased in the garden
my brother and I, by a black butterfly.
Fear in the operating rooms,
tell me about your journey through the labyrinths without memory,
lights cold and blue,
while your mind traverses meticulously
the swarms of laurel, pine and lilac,
it climbs the stairways, mimosa, quince, blackberries,
bench, fountain and colorful fish,
tell me about your journey while the only human sign
is the pulse in your arm.

IV

What a gigantic butterfly I recognized in your house Linda,
gigantic as Pennsylvania, gigantic as María,
Gabriela without borders, Beatriz without walls,

gigantic as the friendship you offered me.
I travel with blindfolded eyes along the road from Sos to Liri,
a butterfly lent me its wings,
dragonfly of the night, amethyst and fire,
I flew, flew along the road from Sos to Liri.

Theory

I am the theory of the wooded grove in Gala's head,
Galatea tower.

I am the body of the harp tightened by Bosch.

I am the garden, the inferno, the fish,
the sands of the hourglass in your hands,
the sorrow in the profile of the princess
painted in Verona by Pisanello.

I am she who is neither born, nor breaks,
nor grows from the ribs of men.

I will live enough

We nourish ourselves with words,
then we dream of colors,
the purest ones come to nest in our memory,
yesterday white and yellow,
today green and blue.

Verbal nourishment, oxygen right to my brain,
I can talk without consideration,
say red or black for states of uncertainty.

Tyrannical ideas,

I live with some things that refuse to be,
difference diffuses them,
transparent and colorless,

I name them a thousand times but they control me,
they leave me trapped in appearances,
I will live enough to find a personality.

The igloo

I construct a building white and yellow
with no more details than a few lines drawn on top,
I erect pyramids, blocks of granite, slender menhirs,
circumferences, capitals, vaults.

Women, always their nests,
cleaning and ordering color and form,
they are the reserves.
I live in a pearly white igloo,
frozen space on top of nothingness,
snow reigns under this warm skin,
life takes advantage of each full moon.
Arctic silence, my arteries burn,
in the polar night the voices of ice dictate their images,
the stars speak, I am getting used to it.

I dreamt I was myself
neither allegory nor symbol nor metaphor of me.
I awake and I only recognize what I'm not:
I suffered neither exile, nor abuse,
I wasn't a slave nor did I sell my body,
that's how much I know about me.

Yes, him I love,
his body passed by flying above me,
confused cloud, in his air I breathe
with no life of my own.

No, him I don't love,
his hair is a wall
growing over my eyes,
blinding and haughty I manage to see with practice.

Yes, him I love,
he carries off seasons and souls,
he builds his house on my foundation,
he pulverizes these roots.

No, him I don't love,
soundless void to hide myself in,
solitary fish defending myself in his tangle of branches
I begin to hear with practice.

Yes, him I love.

Lovers beneath the earth

They hope to reunite beneath the earth,
new life after death,
happy dissolution in their re-encounter,
intertwined dust through which to flow together.
Beloved Telos, grant them a moist and revitalizing repose.

--Along the labyrinth of life we will come to the swamp,
beneath the tower we will meet, already I desire death.
Protect us under your cloak, mother earth, sweet shelter.

Hands and legs reaching toward the limits,
docile, humus and sand facilitate the union,
liana vine dreaming eternal dimensions,
gentle pressure their fingers on torso and arms,
sweet pressure between the two growing and developing.
--My desire already, now, for death.
Thus they say goodbye, lovers in Bosch's sphere,
of glass only minutes of life lie ahead
eternity of death desired.

But times have changed, mutations come
laboratory tests where the chosen don't die,
magic against genetic laws.
They inject them with the red and the green, milk of coral,
the foam of centenary trees,
the dew of swords,
the golden blood that makes them eternal.
The rainbow runs through their veins tightening the nerves,
partial death of progressive mutation,
blue flows the immortal poison, the transformation,
the emptiness of part of being and the fatal sentence:
--You will not come to die, slaves of your time.
You are eternal, long life to the mutants,
act now on the earth and in the air,
on the water fight and divide yourselves, do not become one.

--Dream garden beneath the earth, my Xanadu,
we will live on your sumptuous soul and on my delicious soul,
beneath the earth we will feed one another, your body growing toward me,
mine attaching itself to you as nourishment, you from me and I from yours.

Fire through their veins, blue river through their collected memory.
The years pass shutting them up in spheres of metaphors,
they are water and air, everyday life unreflected in anything.
--Free them with crosses and mirrors!, shout their friends.

Golden blood through their veins, fatal immortality,
don't come near, they are perverse mutations.
Gone is hope, sweet sentence,
sweet curse, sweet metamorphosis of power:
if you touch her, radioactive cloud on her serpent face,
eagle claws, if you touch her, scorpion body,
poison tongue that numbs and kills;
mutation of silence in his medusa eyes
if you look at him, acrobat of words,
living syntagma of robotic silent, if you look at him,
his eyes transform human thoughts into ice.

--We will meet beneath the earth, long live death. . .
The words agreed upon are a whisper in the distance,
a memory impossible to execute, of vengeance and the growth of power
in a painful mutation of lovers condemned to live eternally.
Rage and pain generating energy,
coral blood revitalizing their veins,
kerosene milk igniting their bodies.

The pain that puts an end to pain

The voice of pain opens the door,
the not knowing begins, the "I am a was and a will be and a tired is";
neither body nor desire,
the voice of cornered pain, the noise,
the furious buzzing in the temples,
the faceless face, without expression,
the silence and nothing of nothing.

A part of her ascends.

The pain of her pain,
the deep pain within her
while he released it.
Shame, failure, public opinion
and the insistent figure of her pain
nailed to her inmost.
The pain of him, his end,
the "I'm totally ruined, I'm totally destroyed," he repeated;
the words nesting inside her, reproducing themselves,
mutations of her, metamorphoses settled in,
spreading, appropriating her body:
established pain, proprietary pain, tenant pain, silent *alien*.

Another morning without being,
wounded in a corner of her own house,
sleeping awake, vigilant dreaming:
I am the instant before the sound of the door,
I am what's left of silence,
the sweet dreams of the dead,
I am the limit, the profile,
the nothingness until I say "now I know who I am."

Silence

Silence all day long;
in the abyss of what is not,
life is extinguished.

She lives in rooms without name
where nothing takes form beyond pain.

It was from not speaking,
silence removed her from life.

--Nothing of words, ineffability,
speech is a fiction, words shadows, and blah, blah. . .

She lives in silence, in vertigo's rooms,
where ideas disintegrate.

"Hey there! No one answers me?"

She tried to tell herself and her memory hates her,
long night and long day
where speechless silence, where sonorous solitude.

To: FLL Faculty

From: Linda

Re: Julia Barella's poetry reading

Date: Monday, November 11, 2002

Attached are some of Julia Barella's poems and my translation efforts. Any input on my renderings that you have would be appreciated! Please feel free to copy for your students.

On another note, the room I got for the event is rather small--narrow with maybe 25 seats--so if you want a seat yourself, do come early!