

# **SANTIAGO VIZCAÍNO**

**“IN THE TWILIGHT”**

**“NO BRIGHT STARS IN THIS NIGHT”**

**“DESOLATION”**

**“FUNERAL”**

**TRANSLATED BY ALEXIS LEVITIN**

## IN THE TWILIGHT

Half-asleep,  
the slight lifting of his eyebrow hides his torment.  
He feels his respiration growing huge like a serpent devouring a deer.  
He yawns.  
Apparent clarity has turned obtuse.  
His vision is a death-rattle.  
Far off, anguish clothes itself in tenuous solitude.  
He trembles.  
His heart hangs from the branches of the cypresses.  
From above  
his body looks as vulnerable as a lizard's tail.  
Motionless,  
before a spectacle of scintillating moles,  
he is able to make out the cavern of a fearsome hell,  
where an enormous mouth devours the skulls of steer.

Saliva wets his pillow:  
the lukewarm mucosity of dogs.  
Row after row of rocks  
pitying that all-encompassing dark,  
that intense cold in which the thorns of cactuses shiver.

Hallucinating a lighthouse beam,  
his drunken hands seek somewhere to hold on.

No need to wake up.  
There are no bonfires for the trembling.

In the desolation of the universe  
there is just a body, quivering.

## NO BRIGHT STARS IN THIS NIGHT

The sadness of that blind old man eats away at the edge of his sheet.  
His ancient gaze follows the rhythm of a fly  
and takes pleasure in the shadow of his shadow.

In his breast, the remains of his food pool to a lake of putrefaction.  
His jawbone vibrates to the rhythm of a lugubrious march.

Reclining on the spear of his distress,  
he tries to hide the holes of his repudiation.

His spirit has gone off in search of other flesh,  
another temple.  
He is just a man.

Hell is his own, like hunger and cold.

The wheels of his chair touch the horizon and become discouraged.  
His long nails gather the very earth that will cover him.

Who will wipe away the excrescence of his tears  
when he can bear no longer the urgency of death?

Who will tremble with the air of his final throes?

His dog licks the gangrene from the big toe  
of his only leg.  
Sad dog of the butcher shop,  
dreaming of the scent of viscera.

In the dawn,  
one can hear his moaning like someone giving birth to hate.  
His whole cry spreads pain upon the bed.

Night takes life within its jaws and it begins to rain.

In the street, the roosters crow at six in the morning.  
He imagines it is time to wake up,  
make his bed,  
have some coffee and go off to scrutinize the window.

But there is nothing to see.  
The nightmare is this returning to himself.

## DESOLATION

In the room,  
a trickle of blood tattoos the floor's wooden memory;  
    mineral blood thick with the panting of the tropics.

When the shadow of the afternoon covers the window,  
one can no longer tell the arm from the face,  
    the skin from its flesh.

And that is how the suicide's corpse remains,  
in a solitude as dark  
    as the muddy waters flowing on the plains.

## FUNERAL

Don't breathe,  
the sound of your heart could awaken people's murmurings.

And yet, no need to worry  
about saving someone else or turning to a silent contemplation of your life.

If just once some fool reads your rage and laughs,  
if just once someone breaths your good mood and cries,  
you will know this loss was not in vain.

Don't lose control now at the end,  
arrival is right there,  
you only have to see the miracle of good-bye;  
effort that turns to a fiasco is in vain.

You still have time to take a breath.

I drank a lot, that's true,  
the gods have made pissing a joy sublime.