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Egito Gonçalves

PENDULUM OF FEELING

- 1) At the most unexpected moment of the day, a light breeze arises and brings with it a suggestion of spring that insinuates itself, like the wings of an angel suddenly born on the solitude of the flesh. I am lying down and see, high above, a slice of sky amidst the leaves, a penetrating, uniform blue in which I am unable to decipher the line of destiny. A sunny Sunday can be soothing to deep scars, a balsam to prevent the trees from wilting in the fall. What's been left out is still enormous: will it allow the best delineation of a face that seems to want to come to me through a clouded mirror?
- 2) I rest my hand on your naked legs and the scent of fragrant jasmine comes to me, calming the insomnia of solitary days. I retreat within myself like an egg to feel the place from where the heat comes, the echo of a gaze that passes over me, which I interpret as a seed of joy. And thus I separate myself from the sounds of afternoon and breathe the interior sun your skin communicates to me, a sun of celebration that slips with cunning into the cracks and crevices of what I had already thought a desert.
- 3) I place your face in this landscape, I watch it glide by in its variety to the rhythm of the locomotive and ponder the reason for this constant presence that imprints itself upon the greenness and laughs among poplars, pines, rustic houses . . . Like this landscape, the years flee before me: with nostalgia I ponder what this flight might mean, in the fissure widening between what the eyes sense and what the body already begins to fear. I owe that face this consciousness, I owe to it this pain. And yet, how can I not love that window, that body taking shape, and, in a flash of light, dissolving the twilight shirt already bleeding on the horizon?

- 4) A patch of sky suddenly placed itself within hand's reach and I took hold of it, examining it with love and a degree of fear. It reflects the fields where heather grows, but it also casts upon the water at the dam a few shadowy clouds unraveling in my eyes. This spot is still, solid is the rock on which you sit; the landscape around me invites tranquility, invites one not to notice time... I ask myself, however: what portion can I have of this life bubbling before me, how long will the caress of the flesh last, the possibility for gestures of tenderness? A piece of sky is not the solid rock on which I too am seated, it is just a magic feeling, a fragile stem the wind may turn to iron dust.

- 5) July, opening its gates, preparing its trap, took the violin from its case, the first sounds promised what they couldn't give, fish of madness splashing in the wheat, cream puffs on Sunday mornings, the color of tenderness inflaming gestures, a line of emerald rings advancing from the sea. Deceiver, it went away, leaving on the table some debris, pieces of plaster, the face of suffocation that removes the horizon, transforming solitude to a tombstone. The house turns cold, I don't find peace, I follow the shadow of my thoughts that draws with ash on the cold surface where no verse, no image comes to life again. The gates of July have now closed, a bitter vision of rust rains down upon the hinges.

- 6) I could cry over these dry leaves, for it is autumn and a river of fog drags along tresses of absence as night frees itself and advances like the shadow of birds to destroy my points of reference, to stir up ashen ants that seal my lips and drive away the sound of beaches. The last truth comes here on a leaf of wind with the outline of that face that I've been hunting for so long and whose features will not surprise me as they tame my blood. A shimmer of its eyelashes will raze the walls of time where silence has already planted fast its foot.

Translated from the Portuguese
by **Alexis Levitin**