

2021

I Shall Wear White, Unearthly Silence

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Beatrice Esteve

I Shall Wear White

I shall wear white tonight. For Yemanjá .
The whole of Brazil shall wear white tonight. For Yemanjá.
On my feet pearl studded flip-flops.
Richly handcrafted by Neuza in Trancoso. For me.
I shall “jump the seven little waves”. In my imagination. Joyously.
Determined. On my S. Paulo terrace. Make believe.
I shall look out upon the night sky and “see” Trancoso.
Feel the soft, velvety sand underfoot.
I shall miss the children’s voices.
I shall not miss the mad feasting and noise that is a regular there these days.
Worse apparently now.
A sickening explosive release from a year long repression. Irrespective of
consequences.
I shall not miss this “non” year that is definitely coming to a close.
I shall welcome the familiar “non” day that follows New Year’s Eve.
January 1.
That delicious feeling of quietness that lingers all day long.

Welcome January 1, 2021.
Bringing hope and confidence.
I shall love and hug you all.
Soon.

Such “saudades”.

Beatrice Esteve
São Paulo, December 31, 2020

ADDENDUM

In Brazil it is tradition that everybody wear WHITE for Yemanjá on New Year’s. African divinity. Mother of all waters and OUR mother. Protectress. Called “Candomblé”, a religion that is much lighter than traditional Western Christian ones. Reigns supreme in the North East under a veneer of Catholicism.

Her color is white and one must honor her. On the new moon one brings her flowers. This is African and firmly entrenched in Bahia and the North and has taken over the entire country. One also jumps seven little waves on the beaches throughout Brazil. To enter the New Year well. I love these quaint customs.

Unearthly Silence

Here we are: 2021.

Slipped into it without noticing.

A quiet dinner. Inside, as had been raining. Raining everywhere we saw on the news. Beaches closed at 7p.m.

Bedraggled people departing, forlorn. All day long the beaches had been PACKED.

Everywhere in Brazil clandestine parties taking place. PACKED. A mad frenzy. Fearful they might not get "a party" later....

Wore my Goya Lopes Trancoso gown. Neuza's sandals on my feet. A "semblance" of....?

Firecrackers bursting everywhere while we dined. So anxious...to celebrate. Continued when I sneaked comfortably to bed after dinner....

What else?

Heard not a thing at midnight....Hooray for Ohropax.

January 1, 2021 begins grey. All-around. No longer wet.

Parrots everywhere. Loud, happy chattering. One toucan. Bem-te-vís.

We step out for breakfast on the terrace.

There it is.

That unearthly silence.

Not a single rumble of a single motor car. Neither coming from the Gate 8 side nor Gate 2. Nothing.

Deathly or rather, heavenly silence.

Never have I heard such quietness in São Paulo. Such stillness.

Mami would have said: One can cut it with a knife.

Yes, a plane or two departing/landing from Congonhas.

A dog or two but no nervous barking.

Wonderful.

The year bodes well.