THE ESPRESSO BETWEEN SLEEP AND WAKEFULNESS

ROBERTO ECHAVARREN

TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH BY DONALD WELLMAN AND THE AUTHOR
“Follow me, someone said, to the urinals and then, instead of pissing, we’ll dive in the pool and breathe better. I’m daring.”
He goes before me and the stream carries him to a riverbank while others, each before a branch or a trunk, exercise under watery depths. The first wrestling match, the first banana goes down the river. “Come, here we’ll dive better.”

And peace, the first poem, becomes transparent between water and light. We’re here among cottons soaked in ink. The lime tree branches out against silver air and your faith in the day grows with the measured shining opening up amidst the whirring of tires on the wet macadam. A dog sleeps, breathing with a smooth panting.

At first light your fresh senses have not yet fluffed up. A breath of air hardly awakens me and then another stretch of sleep.

_Caboclos_ protect this beginning of day and the dead, in fluffed up silence are also alive.
Not a point or an area of the earth the navel of the world
but the earth the navel of the universe,
cell, sound chamber, it resonates
and a monad bounces from side to side
on any dot to bounce again.
I positioned neck and throat
to better rebound in retribution.
Nothing is left of what it was.
There was a bay,
cutting retorts, a tablecloth
pricked by the blizzard, snow, sleet,
hail, pellets of ice, small snowflakes,
large snowflakes, a point and a counterpoint
around a nodal element of torsion:
he was surprised that each succession of letters
formed words, the oak and the affliction of fire
bounced against a boundary of stones.
Every component changed position,
took on consistency by travelling,
our intoning flew ahead of us
but we walked over broken shells
and heard the noise of water running.
A stone fell, a ringing resounded
in each phrase, but the jumps
made us forget the sound
to comprehend it further on
and blink, and leave open the other side
while inside this small room at a short distance
under the brow of this ñ
he is still terrified.
EL EXPRESO ENTRE EL SUEÑO Y LA VIGILIA

PREMIO FUNDACIÓN NANCY BACELÓ
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