

Poetry Series

**For Matilde
- poems -**

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For Matilde()

A Kiss

It takes courage
daughter of Zeus
to lower your voice forever
to set this fragrant kiss free
as if it ever were
as if it ever were imaginable
then return to your sisters
to separate stars from stars
to forget the collisions of limbs and planets
to watch rare and uncommon feeling
disappear forever beyond the glade of souls
to watch the moist curve of the earth
wash away the final residues
the pallidness of recollections
swallow landscapes, our dark interiors
Un-kiss
Unwind
Unravel
Uncomprehend
our last vitality
make weak at last the courage of our tongues
the window hides you now
there is no lingering fragrance
no trembling familiarity behind the glass
you have found the solitude of a shadow
the clarity of separateness
you prefer annihilation, better this you say than
the vanities of slow decline
the selfish disquietude of longing
the selfishness of absence
A kiss
Without end
Beyond resurrection
You cannot sleep
you wake in a place you cannot see
something sublime beats with an ancient rhythm
your soft feet fly over burning flowers
in the dance of the muse
something swells in your breast like God

you feel me reaching
into the blue hole you sleep in
feeling for all the things you don't know yet
love me
with your wounds and your dark rage

For Matilde

Absence

Wood smoke takes flight
from the autumn shore
The dawn breaking consciousness
lapsing into stillness
The sea recedes drawn back by the pleasures
of the moon

The water is mad and mournful
beneath the mud the soul is melancholy
I am water
made shallow by loss
Now this immeasurable sound
of absence

You disappearing shapelessly
naturally and heartlessly, without resistance
You have become
too much of an intensity
I struggle
to utter your name

Flooded by ineffable regret
the world left empty
Under my skin
you pick at my soul in whispers
There is no voice in your beauty
Only the sublime moment of entry
The fountains of our mouths
and the tragic passion of our fingers

For Matilde

Alas

You have the wings of a child
You have the lithesome limbs of a dancer
If only, I could feel the wind
hear your symphony
Alas, in this dead church
all is mute
My feathers now bare
mere quills in remorseful hands

Everything an implacable silence

For Matilde

And

You question me
as wreckage on the shore
what seas have you sailed
under Magellan's moon
where is your universe
which horizons have you crossed
what forest have you entered
as a fugitive and found
finally mountains
I answer you with
a church
a corpse
but mostly with
the wing sounds of a line of geese
over the crowded church

And

I was once thin and white
in the dark earth
buried
invisible
interfered with
until you saw me
as a particle in a beam
gave me light and love
the aroma of almond milk
fluttering on your breath

For Matilde

Archipelago

Did I miss this before I found it
stretched like the skin of a lizard
Heart raw with fatigue and dry pleasure
poet of impulse am I just an idea

A mood you awaken just before night fades
in the cold breath of dawn becomes corrupted
made different; a layer of equanimity; the thick outer skin
of established existence
something damaged before it was whole
an arrow broken in flight
waters flow back into the earth

Some take too little of each other
want more than the tepid milk
of mild sensualities
then love makes a mystery of all that
of feelings that burrow beneath the skin as it cools
in final stillness

I have felt suspended
born at the right moment
never stop at my skin
as you do with others
purify and taint the truth I feel on waking
wetness does little more
than drown small moments of joy

Filling the cups of small flowers
that hover like small boats
in the air above the archipelago
of separated existence
landscapes do little more
than make horizons

For Matilde

Blind-Eyed

Just an image now
a parasite burrowing blind-eyed
through the slowly moving sap of hours
whereas once I was a question
of form and a landscape
across which I roamed
beneath a moon
of infinite love and disquiet

For Matilde

Blood And Bone

Horizons hide blood and bone
The thin line of mountains
separate the sounds of calling
but feathers fall
tantalised no more
by ambrosia nor nectar
the son of Zeus
stands waiting
for the water to recede
but it stands stagnant
and cold on his breast
and in the nights
I still lay on the soft down
of your soul
and in the nights
the fox leaves the forest
to bathe in the light of the moon
in the pool of Selene
and in the day
there is so much warmth
in the spread eagled arms of the maple
in their radiance
more golden than light

and in the day
we feel the insistent hand
of life
always pushing
and in the day
I just want to gaze
at the symmetry of trees
and catch a part of you walking

For Matilde

Colour Bleu

Blue alleyways I loved
the way you approached
through the blue mist of conversations
tumbling blue from upstairs windows
I knew you as blue
I loved you as blue
the fluorescent flame felt blue
as it caught my bones
as you scraped your knuckles
along a bluestone wall
until they bled blue cells
all those voices like boats
on the blue sea between
the blue sky of your shirt
and the steel blue of the dawn
when you left and the door closed
I played the blues from Memphis
the bird on the wall by the blue
doors of the elevator turned its raven
blue head forever from a sky that
was anyway never blue but always
stained by smoke and a bluelessness
your face creeps back under the closed door
like blue water

For Matilde

Do You Dance The Tango Lg

Anguish, it's sharp chord
is vaster than sadness
than anything
anything
in the small room the Fado
drains the melancholic air
in the cellar bar near the river
the Tango is danced
to the blissful wounds of music
mute now, always silence
between the sounds
of love, fire and grace
stilled beneath the skin of fingers
the pulse of art faint and numbed
like a guitar in cold ground
love, an arpeggio
of descending sounds
hung like a silkworm
from a sleeping branch
a sweet delirium
the mouth a rose
deeper than anything
than anything
anything

For Matilde

Dorado Lg

Every symbol, ritual
murmurs something
that comes from
the joy we bury
instinctively - to survive
at least
securely, others
who exist, a skin stretched
to prevent loss and sadness
entering, follows us, room to room
but when night comes
I hear the sounds
of your soft feet descending
into jewelled crypts
in which to me
you address what
you have saved, kept sacred
of yourself, miraculously
the philosopher and
the corpse together
in autumn's exquisite hour

We refuse mourning
we put aside anger
and return over
and over to the river
and Dorado

For Matilde

Ecumador

She sits
and gazes at others
the radiant flags of her lips
unfurl themselves from the
mad rose of her mouth
I miss watching
the inchoate passion
rise through her flesh
from it's Inferno
there is some part
of my skin already dead
from her absence
Somehow the universe is more fragile
beneath its Dark Coat
Somewhere we found a wounded space
in which we are altered forever
The equator we crossed brought
both pain and joyful winds
We brought petals from the land
which you will scatter
in the divine isles

For Matilde

Encontrei O Pais Do Meu Coração

Estou perdido na tua história
nos teus rios misteriosos
na terra da tua sabedoria
Fui levado para lá
pelos caminhos estranhos do teu corpo
através das areias escaldante das tuas pele
Atravessei os teus equadores
enquanto me chamavas com teus olhos
levando o teu perfumado fruto a meus lábios
Tu voas-te da tua boca para me encontrar
deixando sons de amor nas minhas mãos
nuas como a água
Tu ris livre como as folhas
as tuas ancas murmuram como algo eterno
Encontrei o país do meu coração

I am lost in your history
your mysterious rivers
the earth of your knowledge
I was led there
by the forest paths of your body
across the hot sands of your skin
I crossed your equators
as you called me with your eyes
held your fragrant fruit to my lips
You flew out from your mouth to find me
left sounds of love on my hands
naked like water
you laugh freely like leaves do
your hips murmur with something eternal
Country of my heart, I found

For Matilde

Feliz Ano Novo

From this frozen cliff
I gaze at leafless trees
submerged where once
people spoke with ancient things

In the wilderness of a dream
I wander without language

For Matilde

Finding Trees

From this frozen cliff
I gaze at leafless trees
submerged where once
people spoke with ancient things

In the wilderness of a dream
I wander without language

For Matilde

God's Fingers

Today I saw
God's fingers in the clouds
holding on to the tail
of an ancient fish
I see you watching me
from the ocean
The sky is our journey
between the water
and the stars
my eyes are cradled
in your hands
forever

Today nothing matters
there are no words
that can say more than
all the gulls on this beach
The sand has taken everything
it is moist with our sadness
dry now with your footsteps
that night
all those nights
when we loved, even then
more than we were capable of doing
You can disturb the air
and I will feel you passing
close by always
the purpose of your heart
like a star
the presence of your soul
of all the fires
what burns between us
is inexhaustible

from the earth
the rose leaves
its crimson shadow

For Matilde

I Am Water 2

Ah xxxxx
there is a warm place
in my body
it is water
an ocean entering tributaries
that have carried silver fish
and you love, love, love
love, the silver of these fish
that carry the sun on their backs
they have travelled long distances
beneath my skin
bodies flapping like open limbs
satisfied

Ah xxxxx
I cannot flow
other than as water
this is my love, water
water,
spreading over you
loosening feelings
moistening stones
the glistening translucent
froth of sirens screaming
leaves golden floating in your eyes
everything washed away
except the great bruises of passion
that turn yellow, xxxxx
on the inside, weeping,
coalescing, warm final tears that shine
like the lights of a sad, sunken ferry
submerged under skin
in layers of silent turgid sacs

Ah xxxxx
we are water
we are falling water
we are the voice of water
and we are wet with its love

For Matilde

I Can Feel The Kindness Of Her

I had wanted to speak to her
in all her languages
to learn all her colours
before dawn
to let her begin
and begin again
to let her be found
and found again
it is hard to imagine her
without a father
because her soul
shines through her skin
It is hard to imagine her
just in the few minutes
since we met
having a past or a future
for you cannot awaken
that which never sleeps
in this moment
in this tunnel
fragile against the lights
of passing cars
she is outside of time

As she walks next to me
I can feel the kindness of her
the thin unfiltered truth in her breast
the sounds of the sea where two currents meet
I hear the sensual movement of her limbs
In the pale shadows I turn my gaze to her face
I see no excuses
I see just the edges of her dreams
she is a gallery
a palette
and in the light of the passing cars
I see she is an exhibition
closed to all but herself

For Matilde

I Had Trouble Walking Today

How can I breathe your beauty
through this suffocated life
blind worms see no more than this
feel the damp leaves
as you emerge
from the earth
there is no art or music in your head
If you lose part of your body
you make yourself new
your brain is a simple loop
without anguish
without hope
without long avenues of vanishing trees
you breath through your skin
which is kept moist only to live
you pass through dead silent eyes
and down the hollow corridors of bones
around the cold statues of the dead
I, on the other hand, have no chance of regeneration
I can only breathe your beauty in episodes
in seasons of flowers and a fatal melodic light

I had trouble walking today.
If I cannot walk how will I be able to come to the door
On second thoughts I will leave it open in case you return
If I cannot walk how will I carry you when you are sick.
If I cannot walk how will I get up and smile as I leave this bus
Through the window the ocean stays silent keeping all its words to itself
Today I walked past old men slouched on benches in the street.
Their diaphragms were tired and felt like wet shoes.
All the words had left them sucked like dead wingless birds into the ocean
Instead they spoke only the sewage of the dying.
I had trouble walking today.
I wanted to go back to the sea - climb into its womb
wait until its waters break and cycads return to the land

For Matilde

I See Us Walking

We walked under the silence of stars
our fingers warm tendrils around our hearts
earlier, before light was squeezed from the air
I had gazed into her fathomless eyes
her skin pure as marble
her arms raised to the dark lustre of her hair
her body glistening and smooth
fragrant and carnal
the ivory of a wondrous beast
there are moments when we do not understand beauty
when we become fearful that if it is touched it will disappear
that it exists somewhere else
somewhere implacable in its grace and sublime purpose
I dare not close my eyes
I dare not even wonder
what it might feel like to be young and strong again
what are these ancient secrets she carries in her
for I am here now
where the planets are curved
and the time I have limited
in who I am now I feel all that I can
I can love
I can touch the sublime hand of beauty
with fingers that are warmer now than yesterday
even when I wake I am sleeping inside myself
her hair falling over and over like butterflies on my chest
her body a willow over water
arched, her perfumed vapours rise
she bends with the wind and the slow breath of desire
in those black eyes with flecks of blue
it was long ago, this long coat in doorways
like Prousts and the memory too of
the cream and chocolate dress she saved for goodbye
in a hollow between sad trees
I see us walking under the silence of stars
our fingers warm around our hearts

For Matilde

I Stole From The Sea Lg

How we thought; overflowed
(saw meaning, even on the
indelibly grey slate, of Sundays,
of dried withered recollection)
and I still do, of meeting
unavoidably, just straying into
each others shells, finding sanctuary
in a space of departure, the sticky
blessing of an emigrant, let us go back
to the sea you said, float in its
blue solace, become the creatures
we are, barely a cell above creation
the language of water in our mouths
how far away you are, I have my
sight turned inward, my matter contrives
to assemble you, your limbs
your mouth, your lips, I wait
to feel the hot tongue of
the afternoon, on my limbs
my mouth, my lips, our bodies
tremble with sound and rumour
I sit in a cafe now; and
there you are, your shoulder-bag full
of the poems that you keep
hidden in a drawer, between your clothes
come for me, come for me
(place of loss and unquenchably sadness)
your face pressed like darkness
against me, warm like earth, you
said nothing more, I see you
have forgotten; turned your blindness to
the slow mucus trail of memories
I stole from the sea

For Matilde

I Taste Of You Lg

What is this
that spills off the page
this overflowing radiance
that drips in raptures
filling my fingers
until they swell and burst
in the act of love
I taste of you
I feel astonished
not blinded at all
by your gaze

For Matilde

In A Bar

The warm sound of people talking
Leaning against each other
In clothes
In the fading afternoon
Like you are doing now
In your dark countenance
In the silence
Many miles from here
I look down and see
The honey sea of your skin
The warm river of your eyes
How were we to know
Your voice
Your voice
Your voice
The membranes between us

Push the darkness aside

For Matilde

In Mauritius

I place on your pillow
my solitude
for you to enter
divine your voice
like water
to rush into my mouth
irrigate all the crimson fields
beneath my tongue
I see under the door
your dreams
making shadows
in the empty harmony of sleep
there was no resistance
nothing ever said
I remember only later
the blue sand clinging
to our bodies
like small islands
that the sky came for
in the morning

For Matilde

In Melbourne

You are silent, still water
without words
there is something fluid
incomplete, viscous
flowing from the heart
of the planets
there are stones always
beneath the keel
of our souls

The rose
an inner trembling
of your hunger
and your pain

For Matilde

In The Year Of The Goat

I hope you never feel collected or clung to
left imprisoned at the end of a long road
asleep beneath the cars
there are so many young things
in the world
they wear their coats like stars
for your value is diminished
when only counted
your sky is endless
pulls at my eyelids
I have no scabbard now
for impossible joy
no place in the desert
I no longer bleed
I (who is this pestilential I?) never intended other
than you to flourish somewhere
to add rays to the sun
to gaze at gulls flying north
to Lavra where I asked you once
for a cigarette
and on the journey home
you told me you had been to Barbados
and nobody noticed what was starting
you put walnuts in your salad, you said
I do not stroke now your face
or feel myself suspended
naked before your eyes
Yet the years roll on and
we skip lunch and eternity
always trying to not ask for more
of the same in case we suffer
too much by its absence
Now I see
once was more than enough
my heart is now rested with that
there is peace now
days left that matter
in the year of the Goat

For Matilde

Incalculable

In the beginning was nothing
something to be filled
it was so sudden
so unexpected
and so faraway
we are kingdoms now
earthly realms of mountains and fields
the uncomplicated silence of the earth and the sky
tends our withering intimacies
feeds both our hunger and pointlessness
as if this is something we can understand
there we are
can you see us, dark Cherokee -
or do you choose banishment
(whereas, I grasp
for the thinnest roots of reason)
and when i cannot gaze at you
the wingtips of my soul
rest on your face

Do not wake precious from your sleep
your dreams fly to me
from the crevices of your heart
your voice breaks itself into pieces
between my fingers
in the dense spaces
of a skull made of glass
your eyes glow infinitely
why do I hear you always in the forest
between words uttered
and words thought
under dead trees

I seek the unbearable asylum
the incalculable
the incomprehensible possibilities
of being
of becoming
of kneeling in The Temple

in silent incense
to incinerate myself
and glow
to hear the kindling cries
of the beggar
in my heart

For Matilde

Invisibilities

What are these charges
these invisibilities
Unzipping dreaming
and transience
and all that noise
we make separating
Silence is as much
part of me as it is of you
It never lasts more than
a few seconds, or Flor Bella
the time it takes solitude
to become shallow
and useless
like dry sweat

Like blindness
and forbidden things

For Matilde

It Is Not Far MI

Glacier cut of the moon
knife steel through clouds
bled as shadows
in flight
It is not dead
Walk dry woody spires
of autumn
close by sea green tussocks
and lamina swollen vesicles
abandoned sirens naked
yellow like a fragrance and a song
This is not dead
Death cannot die over and over
mercilessly undress the minutes
the days the years
unweave the heavy loom of dreams
About too, sun losing-light leaving
weak melancholic images
reflection coven of cold windows
Wait there
I will come
About too, the fierce wind
flames entering skin
which is silence
we, you and I
have no ancestors except
the wet adagio of water falling

Silence that is skin
makes paler the sun
which is innocence
You lay always hanging
from the edge of my skin
Now fallen to earth
embraced by your autumn arms
I cannot breathe as much as I want
I am buried and blameless
the soil of this absurdity
this miracle

in my mouth
I will still come for you
before I sleep
It is not far, my love

For Matilde

Joy

Joy

an excess of the heart

always somewhere

for life exceeds itself

never being exact

For Matilde

Love And Dementia

Looking down she said
you have forgotten
yes, I think so, I said
I am demented
dopamine down
I am a narrow face
looking up I said
some of my pathways are blocked
changed like colours spreading
in an ageing leaf
an impatient sky
an emptied shell
I am a lake of small children talking
I am water turning over small stones in the wind
I am a frozen window
it is an addiction
love is mostly about forgetting
a retreat into infinite expanses of snow
and there is always withdrawal
the endless calendar
of the saddest seasons
looking up I said
I will never forget
the sounds of water
the wild happiness
the transcendence
the unfounded need
the unrealisable-ness of always
arriving at the same time
or her vapours rising through dark air

For Matilde

Lucid Ice

It is not the feathered kiss
of wings spread against the night
the Archangel, the Beckoning
but an avalanche of memories
those then, those now

A spectral journey into myself
a flight over empty spaces
the Only Life, the Tide
the lifting of the eyes
sensuously lucid ice

Forsaken now
floating without limbs
silent then, silent now

For Matilde

Made Me Truly Naked

When my face
is stolen by the earth
when my dust
is scattered to the winds
when the last fragrant flower
falls into the Caminho
flows as silent as you
without motive or cause
when all things lack more than themselves
remember then the firmness of our wings
the sweet curve of our lips
the freedom you gave me
which only you could
remember then our limbless movements
how you stripped me
made me truly naked

For Matilde

Matilde

Today, in the afternoon
I saw a black horse
standing so still
the dark silence of water
a peculiar history in its eyes
told me it had been waiting a long time
for the sound of birds
to return from the sea
I stopped in wonder
and remembered
what it feels like
to feel stillness and waiting

When the door opens
you enter, and interfere
with the air
you lay down, separating
the stillness from waiting

I do not like walking
over flat lands
it is too much like living
uneventfully, too different
to closing eyes
unimaginably filled

Its strange the way
these stones have been arranged
like layers of skin
in the sun
like bodies made from sand
I will lay here
close to the shore
until you do not let me go

Matilde
I told you of
the loneliness of years

Matilde
how I speak your name
before I sleep

For Matilde

Orphan

Anywhere between
zero and one
85% of me
the dark matter you are
this transcendence
of never seeing
of being orphaned
too soon

For Matilde

Oxidised

You have become so resistant
so oxidised
like rust
the red ribs of an old ship
that carried hearts and dreams
across oceans
gleaming new steel
separating water
until it beached like a whale
in unfamiliar air
spread like the limbs
of a fisher-womans
milk thighs
frozen granite against
cold northern skin
the dawn over rocks
like a sleeping animal
fish take to the sky
in grey circles of steel
around the moon

For Matilde

Randomness

Today I saw two dolphins in the ocean
close to the shore
I followed them for a while
their graceful bodies sliding
into holes between the waves
rising and falling
like two lovers
joining oceans

You phoned me from Frankfurt once
I had never heard your voice so full
A dark flock of swallows

I saw birds too
pecking through the silver scales
of a fish, stranded in death
light taking flight in resurrection
something dark sucks on the lips of the living
the birds leave without learning to love
Somewhere other than the ocean or the sky

No touching

In the nights
between the earth and the flickering stars
your eyes taught me things
that I had never known before

In Lavra we drank a Bock each
and I felt the gaze of your body
and later the earth above me

You do not have to know where you are
There is an unfathomable silence
The pavement of your soul circles
the moon endlessly, if you sit in the same place
the same worn stone forever
you will always know where you are

The dress you wore
coming in the night from
the restaurant with a great tree in the courtyard
it made the soft sound of butterfly wings
falling into tears

No hands

Do you remember Lorca? In the market
he listened to white limbs flapping like fish
on marble - divining the pleasures of water, the wet
skin of oceans and rivers parting, always
either what is or what is not, never expecting to
say what will happen. Only that you might arrive
and peel away the layers of possibilities. Loosen reason.
Make love, in oblivion to all but forbidden intimacies
In shared remorse
In the permissible taboo of dreaming
We lay down in the mirror of ourselves
We become more than we were

That will never leave me
It is much more than your pink dress

My love, it is the beauty you couldn't see
Not even now as you feel yourself waking
As you bend over your books in the window
It always preceded you, surrounded you, a veil
over your being, a fugitive wind from the Caminho

I should have taken you to the hut at the edge of a village
and woken with you early to walk in a faraway forest
There is so much emptiness now
Only trees left to count
I am drawn now to only empty places
where we can feel motionless

When you make love
do not look outside
at all the silver things

You sit and watch me eat

I had never seen your eyes so full

Do you know Ulrich? A Man Without
Qualities. In his modest chateau he exists endlessly
- dampened and made wretched by the mist of probabilities, by
the intentions of a forlorn God, the purposeful flesh of a faint melancholic heart.
A life diminished by everything known.

The first time you kissed me
in a side street
in your blue car

Which are we? The possibility of either this or that,
of nothing, of burning, of voices you hear in
the canals of your bones, screaming to be heard
before drowning.

For Matilde

Seu Jorge

Two tears meander - catch
planes from nowhere to
nowhere else -
like small boats
dreaming
under the hanging
cathedrals of your limbs
I watch from the other bank
your breath rise like
a thousand small sails
Your eyes
permit only your senses
I hear
the sound of rain on
an iron roof
washing away
the wearisome comfort
of knowledge
So little time
in an unobtrusive moment
to love and die
to disentangle from patience
and yourself
If only we could go beyond ourselves
I hear the echo of footsteps
I wait to drink impossible beauty
from the deep cup of your hands
I hear the creature of your mouth moan
I hear Seu Jorge

For Matilde

Slenderness

Slender is a feeling of coming to the end
of something exquisite, of being sharpened
by a hot knife into something ecstatic
it is always the way I remember your limbs
and all the tips of your passion
Even as you leave and walk into a distance
the nights and the waiting linger

For Matilde

Storks

It has come thus
for I am an essential
to only this lonely life
I sit with storks
on the red crowns of chimneys
above their cold breasts
that once glowed
in the light of families praying
before eating at dusk
I watch for strangers
for all who have passed
on the highway
novices of the Inquisition
once left the debris
of skulls in doorways
flowers now grow
where once crosses burned
now the leaves rustle
under the worn feet of pilgrims
families with barren faces
with clasped hands
teeth clenched
drag winds and abuse
from the cold teeth of the Sierras
only the Gods see more than I
as I sit with storks
on the red crowns of chimneys
near the border

For Matilde

The Breath Of Foxes

Waiting
for snowdrops
to raise the snow

Waiting
for the warm
breath of foxes

Watching
you, from the edge
of the wood

Wanting

To be swept up
as fragments
in your eyes
trapped
like birds
in a golden net

For Matilde

The Crimson Disturbance

You are brighter than fresh snow
frost sparkles like silver water
on your skin
You are the sky, dark like a hammer
Tongues lick at the cosmos
Like lizards thinking
Like the wake of many boats
all fleeing the lake of your soul
Under the crimson disturbance
of all the moons we lay under

For Matilde

The First Fire

Sweet form
lie still
until I wake
the red tips
of your silk breasts
dreams burst
from wet spheres
make my heart blue
and my eyes
the first fire

For Matilde

The Lake

It is so peaceful here
the untouched water
it's surface occasionally
broken
under the bough of a lychee
across the green silence
above rippling reflections
the trees march head to head
up the face of a hill
like an army of soldiers
going home
a man and a woman
sit down opposite me
they were once young lovers
now they share the sublime gaze
of love that has stayed
their hearts share the fragrance
of an inviolable flower

This morning I saw you walking
with sadness still on your face
and I thought of it
as an old coat
that you go to your wardrobe to find
only to see one day that it has gone
nothing but some old strands of once familiar hair
left like dry boneless history on the floor
it is so peaceful here
the days pass one at a time
as we are doing
I see the emerald eye
of hope break the surface again
it stains the water in circles
spreading like small fish
beneath the soft silences
of watching trees

For Matilde

The Rain

Like this my body
calls you
the rain with humour
slashes my face like
a hot spitting smile
Cloudless I am exposed
and alive
breathing the fumes
of your mouth
I see inside you
all your cities and towns
the mountains that rise in you
the oceans that send winds
to your soul
I cannot circle you
or ever want you to subside
or recede
or grow fewer thorns
You I feel the blood of

For Matilde

The Sky Your Kingdom

The night is your sun
The sky your kingdom
In the misty liquids
of your eyes
something infinite sleeps
I wonder how
beauty is known
I wonder at the breadth
of its dark wings
and how it flies so far
to find the lustrous
gold of dawn

For Matilde

The Sound Lg

It is so essential
without substance
the sound of your soft feet
your body dripping like a candle
you came silently from water

For Matilde

To Drown Words

Small particles
chase light under mountains
nothing is nothing
There was an answer once
But the air leaks now
Leaves rust burying sand
Everything leaving
Turning everything away
From the tide of thoughtful things
Its ceaseless scandal of words
Float
realise the infinite grace
Of stillness

Gaze blindly
steal a moments silence from purpose
to disengage attention from yourself
to drown words in
the thoughts of the sea
Your mind a river
drawing everything to itself
devouring flesh.

For Matilde

Was

Was there something
That preceded sentimental things

Something purer
that burnt out your eyes

And felt like the universe

For Matilde

When He Awoke Again

The long iron bridge
barrels strapped to long narrow barges
The long thin face of a holy man
The wall of heroes around the Praca
Men lean in solitariness from small windows
The girl with wild eyes plays a fugue on her yellow violin
You sit head inclined, honey flows in your eyes
How beautiful unawareness is
He sees against the sun
the glistening threads that join them
the way her mouth moves in his
It is their only freedom
Past the round nautical windows
The Islamic geometry of others
The salon of paintings; a sea battle
a lady reading by a tree in a garden in France;
The dog barking at birds that sit on colourful fruits
When he awoke she was sitting in a soft claret chair
wrapped in the morning light
that came over the top of the hill
bouncing off the whites of the crew of the old cruiser
that had cast off and was already midstream
They loved each other in the soft claret of the chair
There are marks in the mud by the river
They had crawled out of membranes
distilled into meaning and wonder
When he awoke he saw the silhouette of her face
fluttering against the golden neck of a harp
He could hear from under the eaves of the terracotta roof
the noisy sounds of swallows at work on their dry scaly nests
From the small expostcao vinhos they watched the descendant of kings
fish the river with two rods
In the night the river is full of low whispers
From the terrace
From the Giacometti chairs with striped cushions
they gaze at the crimson dance of the moon and
marvel at the distances of comets
When he awoke again
she was sitting in the soft claret chair

The warm tendrils of her fingers closed in fragrant prayer
How unaware beauty is
How difficult it is to remember and forget

For Matilde

When I Cannot See You

When I think of
you smiling
I see your heart beating
in your eyes
When I cannot see you
your wing tips touch my face
You are a lake
on which the moon dances

For Matilde

Where Maps Have The Face Of Sacred Things

Your body will betray you
as it has to
when love troubles

We live through
the fixtures of our existence
We watch fragments of ourselves
spiral and flutter
like abandoned leaves
withered underfoot
at the edge of the earth

Always on the outside
feeling only ourselves
seeing only ourselves
in the pleasure of mirrors
I fly into the sun of your body
in your fire
for your fire
I hear the crackling flames
of your inner voice

The ghost of a tree
by the lucent race of a river
you stretch your arms
to gather my soul
you lead me by the hand to walk
the boundaries of emptiness

To where love is untroubled
and where maps
have the face of sacred things

For Matilde

You Sit And Watch Me Dream

I sweep up all the leaves
they look up at me
like dried flat worms
curved in elliptical resignation

They cover the autumn grass
like an armada of small shallow boats
savaged by a storm
With eyes closed I bend
and salvage just one

I feel the rust on my fingers
I raise its twisted battered prow
I feel all it's journeys
all the depths of the oceans
beneath its broken narrow keel

Against the wall
at the end of the garden
you sit watching my dreams
your eyes a map of all emotions
of all latitudes
of the endless lament of sirens
of all the golden meridians
your lips open like a perfect rose

For Matilde