

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