

Jordi Virallonga

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Mímesis del arquitecto

Quien construyó esta casa
nunca pensó que iba a odiarte
y los niños tendrían sólo una habitación
para ahogar a cuentos y a canciones bajitas
los gritos de sus padres:
que por favor sigan queriéndonos, te pido,
nosotros como si no estuviéramos,
no queremos molestar.

Quien levantó esta casa lo hizo a base
de prósperos años nuevos y negocios familiares,
no proyectó refugios para el fajador
que escapaba oyendo el puente
derrumbarse tras de él casi cada día
y sabiendo que el vencedor
se queda con todo al sonar la campana.

Es curioso viajar sin que pase el tiempo,
tener veinte años más y que se estreche el camino
en esta carretera aparecida por los faros,
con piedras de repente, lugares

cuyo tiempo es su ausencia de destino.
De nosotros queda sólo una casa malvendida.
Los arquitectos no saben de amor,
como tú dibujan planos
donde sólo permanece
lo que jamás se habita.

Mimesis of the architect

Whoever built this house
never thought I was going to hate you
and that the kids would only have one room
to drown out their parents shouting
with stories and hushed songs:
please keep loving us, I beg you,
as if we weren't there,
we don't want to bother.

Whoever raised this house did it thinking of
happy new years and family affairs,
they didn't see it as a refuge for the boxer
who fled hearing the bridge
collapse behind him almost everyday
and knowing that when the bell rings
the winner takes all.

It's curious to travel without time passing,
to be twenty years older and the road stretches before you
on this highway lit up by headlights,
with stones, all of a sudden, places
whose time has no destination.

All that remains of us is this house we've sold at a loss.
The architects know nothing of love,
like you they draw up plans
where all that's left
was never there.

[Translated into English by Emily MacBride]

A veces sucede esto que te digo

Sucede que lo más nimio te amontona,
subes las escaleras y al buscar las llaves
encuentras tres monedas,
las puertas cerradas no te esperan,
todas, y son muchas,
a veces sucede esto que te digo,

que estás bien pero te dobla
el dolor un clavo en el costado
y sigue teniendo el día
un montón de veinticuatro horas,

pero nada podrá contigo
aunque la muerte sea una frase
que te odie treinta años:
tus hijos no son tuyos ¿recuerdas?
y qué me importa a mí el dinero
si no vas a quedarte a mi lado.

Sometimes what I tell you comes true

It just so happens that the smallest thing can build up on you,
you go up the stairs and while looking for your keys
you find three coins,
the closed doors aren't waiting for you,
any of them, and they are many,
sometimes what I tell you comes true,

that you're okay but you double over
from the pain in your side
and the day never stops having
a heap of twenty four hours,

but nothing could ever wear you down
even if death is only a phrase
that haunts you for thirty years:

your children aren't yours, remember?
and what does money matter to me
if you're not going to stay by my side.

[Translated into English by Emily MacBride]

Un déu minúscul

Creus que ets fort,
que sense tu ni fills ni festa, res hi hauria
sense el mascle que al jardí encén el foc.

Saps que el teu aniversari no comença sense tu,
que som civilitzats, que els fills
no s'han de ressentir d'allò que fan els pares.

Trec el vi, el congre i les sardines
perquè puguis seguir rostint
un grapat de bèsties esquarterades.

Al final, qui collirà els ulls
que miraven les faldilles? Qui acompanyarà
Leonard Cohen quan l'última persona se'n va,
els llums sense orelles amb desitjos incomplets,
els plats tacats de boques, i tu borratxo, satisfet,
traient pel nas la gola, mentre jo recullo altra vegada
les engrunes al jardí i a l'altar on han cremat
les ofrenes al déu minuscule que jau entre les capsos?

A tiny god

You think that you are strong,
That without you there would be no children and no parties,
There would be nothing without the man who lights the fire in the garden.

You know that your anniversary doesn't start without you,
That we are civilized, that children don't have to suffer
for what their parents do.
I bring wine to the table, and conger and sardines
so you can go on roasting
a heap of quartered animals.

In the end, who will gather the eyes
that gazed at the skirts? Who will keep Leonard Cohen
company after after the last person has gone,
the lights without ears with unfulfilled desires,
the dishes dirty with mouth stains, and you, drunk, satisfied,
throwing up while I pick up once more
the crumbs in the garden and at the altar where the offerings have been burned
for the tiny god who lies between cardboard boxes?

[Translation into English by Marlon L. Fick and Francisca Esteve.]

Destemps

Puc acariciar iguanes, musclos
i altres bèsties inacabades,
submergir-me en mars de corall,
però no dormir amb tu aquesta tarda
de mar i vent tramuntanat
fumant al costat del sol de la finestra.

Dic que tot s'acabarà, i tot comença:
el mar de dalt, les columnes del passeig,
les tempestes i el cel mossegant-me la cara.

Dorms sense son, com dormen els peixos a l'aigua,
i sense ocupar la millor part del meu llit.
I jo m'exigeixo el torn dels adormits,
la força que vull mentre t'acabes.

Untimely

I can caress iguanas and mussels
and other lower animals,
plunge myself in coral seas,
but cannot sleep with you
this afternoon of the sea and north wind,
smoking beside the sunny window.

I say that all will end, and all begin:
The sea above, columns of the promenade,
storms and skies gnawing at my face.

You sleep without dreaming like fish sleep in water,
and without lying on the better side of my bed.
And I urge myself to surrender to sleep
the strength I yearn for when you have
reached the end.

[Translation into English by Marlon L. Fick and Francisca Esteve.]

Jordi Virallonga (Barcelona, 1955) is professor of Spanish Literature at the University of Barcelona and founding president of the "Aula de Poesia de Barcelona" since its inception in 1989. He has served as a Spanish lecturer at the University of Turin and guest professor at various American, European and African universities, where he has given conferences, seminars, workshops and poetry recitals. In addition to poetry, he has published several essays and articles on literary criticism, specializing in European and Latin American comparative literature. He has also written several children's and youth books. He is a translator of French, Portuguese, Italian and Catalan poetry. In this regard, special mention may be made of two anthologies of Catalan poetry translated into Spanish in a bilingual edition: *Sol de Sal – la nueva poesía catalana (1976-2001)* Ed. DVD, Barcelona 2001 and *20 del XX, poetas catalanes*. Ed. La otra. México DF, 2013. He has also translated the complete works of Joan Salvat Papasseit into Spanish. He has been received several distinctions, numerous national and international literary awards and a honorary doctorate. Many of his poems and some of his poetry books have been translated into several languages. Widely reviewed by remarkable poets, his latest published books are *Incluso la muerte tarda* (Madrid: Visor, 2015) and *Amor de fe* (Lleida: Pagès, 2015).