

Dedicated to Ana & Jose Vinagre & their dog Binnie

The fado singers have a dog.
They tell us
everything is fado,
nothing
is beyond the reach of fado.
So the dog must be fado,
to.
The singing of fado is stylized and passionate:
Gestures with dark shawls,
of longing;
The dog waits outside the tent.
He is good.
Then he is not good.
He runs onto the stage.
His heart
cannot be contained.

Tudo isto é Fado

Cicadas

They sprawl into our imaginations,
although we probably won't get to Connecticut
to hear the inland tides of their percussion.
Their disproportions disturb us.
Seventeen years underground,
then for a few weeks
only
the multi-state emergency
of their search for love.
Their lives underground
may be richer than we think.
They are nourished by fluids
from the roots of trees.
They know the forest in a different way.
Over the years,
they molt,
steadily becoming more robust,
burrrowing deeper
towards roots they had not known before.
They must feel their truest direction
is down,
until they are summoned to another molt
and the extravaganza.

There's something
about the heft of it in your hand
that reminds you
of the balsa wood of childhood,
the balsa wood of backyard flights,
and the improbable
bright
copper wings,
tilted
just so,
are already
an invitation,
but I think it is
finally
the re-
purposed brad eyes
that make you want to pick it up
and make it fly.
They are so plucky and earnest.
He wants to play,
but if necessary
he could fly for help
for the child trapped in the well.

Flying Fish *(for Mio Manchi)*

My Cowboys

It wasn't enough to watch them on TV.
Their stories tumbled out of me.
I drew their horses
with exuberant manes and tails.
I practiced my quick draw.
Quick, out of the holster
back, then quick, again.
My sister's room was right across the hall.
At bedtime,
I'd ask her to pick a channel.
She'd sit on the edge of her bed,
I'd sit on the edge of mine.
My stories were ruthless and loopy.
I sent a cowboy across a frozen lake
with no boots, no shoes, even.
These men with their hard names,
Rod or Buck,
knew something.
I wanted to learn it.

Snout

In the 70's, when I shared a house
two of my roommates
came back from Maine with a box that grunted.
We fixed up a place in the basement.
I don't remember where we got the straw.
What I remember most about Ivan was his snout.
He shoved hard against your hand.
You felt the pressure of another mind,
the close work
of scrutiny.
Everything was new for him.
He snouted his way
into contact with the world,
a physical intelligence
both pushy and discerning.

Now, in my sixties,
I'm slowly losing my sight.
Glaucoma, mainly.
I could use some of that exploratory
and delicate
physical intelligence.
I think of my old roommate,
his snout out ahead of him,
puzzling
against the next thing he needed to know.

SNOUT



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SNOUT

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