

Rock Water Ladder Dream Crónica

Susana Chávez-Silverman, Pomona College

2 septiembre, 2012
(Back in) Claramonte, Califas

*Para Montenegro, mi amor
y para Zachary Mirman & Marian Williams*

As I'm sure you know, *ons stad is sommer gefok* now. New Orleans is suffering, some massive, scary flooding is happening all over Louisiana. In some places even worse, surprisingly, than 7 years ago with Katrina. Mi corazón sangra: I travel there often, have close friends there and *natuurlik*, that is the city of our corazón com/partido.

Suffused with the feeling in/of your voice all day, ayer. Your familiar emo-laconic voz shot through me, flecha al corazón. I'd dreamt about you, and awakened with the *certainty* that I needed to phone you.

Went to bed last night reinhabiting a dream I had 3 months ago, unos días después del Venus Transit. I dreamt about the sea, a ladder, and a rock-face.

I was standing on a cliff, looking down into clear-blue, moving water. Podía ver un cliff-face en la otra orilla. There was a ladder standing in the water, y una mujer. I couldn't see her face clearly, pero I knew the woman was me.

Last night, I knew (lo había intuido en junio)—o confirmé, digamos—the idea of you as that rock-face. I again remembered/*felt* myself como la mujer en el agua. The ladder

presented a way up the rock-face—an escape ladder—pero no me interesaba usarla. Felt no pressing need to get out of there.

The rushing water was pushing me toward, up against the rock-face. Era una fuerza insistente, natural. Yet not ... aggro, ni peligroso. I felt no fear. Ese rock-face se sentía ... hard, yet paradoxically yielding, también. And strangely, uncannily ... warm.

Now (digo, after South Africa), me siento confirmada en los foretelling powers de ese dream: *sé* que ese rock-face is you.

You *are* as ostensibly hard, unyielding as a rock-face. Y sin embargo, this is only a surface (reading). I probe harder, deeper, y (te me) cedes. You accommodate. Almost with a sense of alivio, it seems to me. Shockingly warm. De hecho: ese too-hot, molten lava core is precisely what the stone-face seeks to safeguard. El correlato objetivo de ese tu impossibly tense dyad: between shield-yield.

En el sueño, I turned *my* face toward that rock-face. Laid my cheek against that outcropping of earth, a la vez forbidding and warm, as if lit from a fire within.

Even as I slept on your firm yet yielding shoulder in *Vasbyt*, 30 years ago. As our Dodge van chariot-turned-calabaza hurtled us toward Chicago, hacia nuestra separación. As the blood from our lost 'little zygote'—and your cum—still seeped out of me. As our tears flowed. My head on your shoulder, acurrucados en nuestro green sleeping bag, dormimos.

In a startlingly similar scenario, así dormimos ahora, last month, in Pretoria. Reclaiming our passionate, *my-country* manera de dormir, soldered together, in the city where we'd come apart, en tu país. In South Africa now, my face pressed against your firm shoulder, my legs curled against your nalga, nuestros pies entrelazados. Or—most of the night—you turned toward me, detrás de mí, your body tracing the outline of my back, my butt. Tu brazo, encircling my breasts, pressing me toward you, possessive, tightly, mi mano sobre la tuya.

So we slept, juntos.

Teensy 'Out of Africa' Crónica

5 enero, 2013
Claramonte, Califas

For Isak Dinesen (otra aries), in memoriam
and for Wim Lindeque

That H and I may find a way, de alguna manera, to come and go from one another, in love.

Así de sencillo (ja ja).

Oh, quiero ser como Denys Finch-Hatton y que tú seas como la Karen Blixen. Even if this analogy is topsy turvy, en términos del género. I mean: you are the great white (non) hunter, and I your foreign, writer amante.

Pero I embrace el Finch-Hatton's fierce love for la Blixen, outside the bond/age of marriage, dispensing with the normal convivialities (and trivialities) of the always day-to-dailiness, disappearing, laaargos trechos, into the bush. To do his thing. No con otras amantes, necesariamente (as la Blixen jealously accused him of, de vez en cuando). O no principalmente. Era ... otra cosa. More than anything, su radical necesidad de soledad. He needed to miss her, me parece. Craved the yearning. Y ample airspace alrededor suyo.

Y ella, wildly, strangely independent in her own right, nevertheless still kind of struggled to accept it, accept him, tal cual era. She yearned for something more, algo más...qué sé sho: reconocible, perhaps. Pero they loved each other. Sin lugar a dudas. Siempre. Hasta el final. His untimely, tragic, blaze-of-glory, downed-byplane muerte. To me, their love, su modo de amarse, was perfect.

There, lo he dicho. Este es mi ideal. My latest greatest hope.

Astral Logic Crónica

28 January, 2013
Thompson Creek Trailhead
Claramonte, Califas

*Para Montenegro, altyd, y hoy, en nuestro día
and for Joanna Martine Woolfolk, in memoriam*

Siguiendo la star-cycle lógica de nuestro lifelong love (como dice Joanna, my longtime astróloga), no es coincidencia que last year, 2012—30 years exactly after we'd met (on this very day: 28 January, 1982, en el Balboa Café, San Francisco)—te (me) apareciste, te (me) abriste, again.

Instant combustion. Right from the get-go, desde el mero instante que nos vimos, again, after so long. Ironic (¿o el destino, the hand of fate?) that your heart should bleed love—rojo amor arrojado—for me. Que te (me) desnudaras tan completely, tan startlingly, en el mismo lugar que nos había tronchado en 1982.

Pretoria.

Blame apartheid. Culpa a tu mamá (prim, xenophobic, class-bound provincial Scottish arribista). Blame your fear (el miedo del miedo del amor, like the poet Alejandra Pizarnik says)—el miedo de tu propio corazón excesivo. Blame my mid-20's hyper-politicized guilt and anti-apartheid outrage, culpa mi terca impaciencia.

I have. I do.

Pero fijate que como te estoy diciendo, la foto como que...just snapped into focus, al pensar las cosas—us—en términos de los astros. As is my wont, desde la infancia. Y desde esta óptica galáctica, let's say (o ... extra-galáctica), it all makes perfect sense.

So, I should've seen it coming, supongo (ah, pero mi propio persimmon-squishy, Aztec-ripe corazón es tan y *tan* hope-springs-eternal).

Your heart had begun to immure itself (that awful, precise, medieval-sounding, architectural term you often use, al describirte) by December 1982. Un año después de

conocernos en mi país, en San Francisco, nuestra ciudad. Sólo 5 meses después de mi arrival in Johannesburg. As shocking to me, esa tu repentina emo-parálisis, as when your heart had poured itself suddenly, abundantly forth to me in my land (a pesar de ser un self-described ‘rough, rugged and independent’ *oke*), al comienzo de ese año.

De la misma manera, by December 2012, siguiendo una terrible simetría astral—y en fatídica compensación por esa (for you, terrifyingly excessive) apertura pretoriana en agosto—te me habías comenzado a clausurar. Again.

Go ahead, te escribí. Preténdete Judas. It ain’t gonna work for you, y tú lo sabes. You can try all you want, pero you can’t hide from la emo-verdad.

Tamp it down, push it down, deep, adentro tuyo. Intenta enterrar esta verdad. Pero como dice Faulkner (más o menos): what’s buried alive is just that. Sólo y precisamente eso. Enterrado. Pero alive.

La verdad de nuestro amor, star-scripted, will only burrow deeper. Dolor agudo, punzante.

Like your angina diagnosis el 21 de diciembre (el día del dizque Mayan End of the World): a medical objective correlative of your tortured, wannabe resolutely safety-*soeking* corazón.

Más o menos invisible, on the surface (except for those blasts of unresolved rabia—your ‘buffalo temper,’ como dices—and that resigned wince cuando te retratan unguarded para una CaraBobo *fotie*), esa verdad will worm its way ever-deeper into your fortified, exquisitely vulnerable heart. Cual la proverbial thorn en pata de león.

Pero LITTLE EYE, ¿eh? He aquí que la star-cycle logic todavía tiene algo que decirnos. Si el 2012 siguió—in sequentially analogous if compressed fashion—los acontecimientos de nuestro 1982 beginning, then it follows that in 2013, the Year of the Serpent, you should acknowledge the error of your ways. Incluso deberías (una brazen hope, lo reconozco) pedirme perdón. Confesarme again (confesarte a ti mismo primero, OB-vio)—like you did in the *News Café*, in Pretoria, last August—que me amas. That you can’t—que no *quieres*—vivir sin mí.

You did this once. In 1983. Pero back then, my young, tender, trampled, proud heart se había vuelto páramo. Scorched earth.

Ahora no. Ya no.

Sigo siendo yo. The one you know, the one you love. Pero soy otra, too.

You remarked it yourself, in Pretoria. En la cama. My pilgrim's progress. Mi largo peregrinaje hacia la paciencia. 'You've been an excellent student of patience lately, I'd say, Shug,' me dijiste.

Come, Montenegro. My *Bok Boytjie*. My lion-lover. Deja que te quite esa espina. Let me.