

a dog represented by an ear, a bird replacing the tree on which it sang. Thanks to these beings which indulged in acts which escaped all interpretation, edifices, whole cities were built, real cities made of emptiness and thousands of stones piled one on another, creatures rolling in blood and tearing arteries, playing the role of what Thomas had once called ideas and passions. And so fear took hold of him, and was in no way distinguishable from his corpse. Desire was this same corpse which opened its eyes and knowing itself to be dead climbed awkwardly back up into his mouth like an animal swallowed alive. Feelings occupied him, then devoured him. He was pressed in every part of his flesh by a thousand hands which were only his hand. A mortal anguish beat against his heart. Around his body, he knew that his thought, mingled with the night, kept watch. He knew with terrible certainty that it, too, was looking for a way to enter into him. Against his lips, in his mouth, it was forcing its way toward a monstrous union. Beneath his eyelids, it created a necessary sight. And at the same time it was furiously destroying the face it kissed. Prodigious cities, ruined fortresses disappeared. The stones were tossed outside. The trees were transplanted. Hands and corpses were taken away. Alone, the body of Thomas remained, deprived of its senses. And thought, having "corpse which opened its eyes and knowing itself to be dead climbed awkwardly back up into his mouth like an animal swallowed alive. Feelings occupied him, then devoured him. He was pressed in every part of his flesh by a thousand hands which were only his hand. A mortal anguish beat against his heart. Around his body, he knew that his thought, mingled with the night, kept watch. He knew with terrible certainty that it, too, was looking for a way to enter into him. Against his lips, in his mouth, it was forcing its way toward a monstrous union. Beneath his eyelids, it created a necessary sight. And at the same time it was furiously destroying the face it kissed. Prodigious cities, ruined fortresses disappeared. The stones were tossed outside. The trees were transplanted. Hands and corpses were taken away. Alone, the body of Thomas remained, deprived of its senses. And thought, having entered him again, exchanged contact with the void.

SI MUERO EN LA CARRETERA (1970)

IF I DIE ON THE ROAD

by Virgilio Piñera

trans. Juliana Canal Paternina

I

Si muero en la carretera no me pongan flores.

If I die on the road do not put me flowers.

Si en la carretera muero no me pongan flores.

If on the road I die do not put me flowers.

En la carretera no me pongan flores si muero.

On the road do not put me flowers if I die.

No me pongan si muero flores en la carretera.

Do not put me if I die flowers on the road.

No me pongan en la carretera flores si muero.

Do not put me on the road flowers if I die.

No flores en la carretera si muero me pongan.

Do not Flowers on the road if I die put me.

No flores en la carretera me pongan si muero.

Do not flowers on the road put me if I die.

Si muero no flores en la carretera me pongan.

If I die do not flowers on the road put me.

Si flores me muero en la carretera no me pongan.

if flowers I die on the road do not put me.

Flores si muero no en la carretera me pongan.

Flowers if I die on the road do not put me.

Si flores muero pongan en me la no carretera.

If flowers I die put me on the do not road.

Flores si pongan muero me en no la carretera.

Flowers if put I die me on do not the road.

Muero si pongan flores la en me en carretera.

I Die if put flowers the on me on road.

La muero en si flores pongan no me carretera.

The die on if flowers put me do not road.

Si flores muero pongan en me la no carretera.

If flowers I die put on me the do not road.

Flores si pongan muero me en no la carretera.

Flowers if put I die me on do not the road.

Si muero en las flores no me pongan en la carretera.

If I die on the flowers do not put me on the road.

Si flores muero no me pongan en la carretera.

If flowers I die do not put me on the road.

Si en la carretera flores no me pongan si muero.

If on the road flowers do not put me if I die.

Si en el muero no me pongan en la carretera flores.

If in the I die do not put me on the road flowers.

II

Voy en cacharrito, en una cafetera,

going in a junky car*, in a coffee pot*

yo voy por la carretera;

I go on the road;

yo voy, voy yendo por la carretera.

I go, go going on the road.

Yo voy a un jardín de flores que está por la carretera,

I go to a garden of flowers that is near the road,

yo voy en un cacharrito, en una cafetera,

I go in a junky car, in a coffee pot,

voy a comprarles flores a mis muertos,

going to buy flowers to my dead ones,

pero no me pongan flores si muero en la carretera.

but do not put me flowers if I die on the road.

III

Si muero en la carretera me entierran en el jardín

If I die on the road bury me in the garden

que está por la carretera, pero no me pongan flores,

That is near the road, but do not put me flowers,

cuando uno tiene su fin yendo por la carretera

when one has his end going on the road

a uno no le ponen flores de ése ni de otro jardín.

one gets no flowers from that or any other garden.

IV

Si muero, si no muero,

If I die, if I don't die,

si muero porque no muero

if I die because I don't die

si no muero porque muero.

if I don't die because I die.

Si muero en la carretera.

If I die on the road.

Si no muero pero en la carretera si muero.

If I don't die but on the road I do die.

Si muero porque no muero en la carretera.

If I die because I don't die on the road.

Si no muero porque muero en la carretera,

If I don't die because I die on the road,

no me pongan f, no me pongan l, no me pongan o,
do not put me f, do not put me l, do not put me o,

no me pongan r, no me pongan e, no me pongan s,
do not put me w, do not put me e, do not put me r, do not put me s

no me pongan flo, no me pongan res,
do not put me flo, do not wers,

si muero en la c.
if I die in the r.

THE LESBIAN BODY (1973)

by Monique Wittig

trans. David Le Vay

The is no trace of you. Your face your body your silhouette are lost. In your place there is a void. In m/y body there is a pressure at the level of the belly at the level of the thorax. There is a weight on m/y chest. Initially these phenomena are intensely painful. Because of them *I* seek you but without knowing it. For instance, *I* walk beside the sea, m/y entire body is sick, m/y throat does not allow m/e to speak, *I* see the sea, *I* gaze at it, *I* search, *I* question m/yself in the silence in the lack of traces, *I* question an absence so strange that it makes a hole within m/y body. Then *I* know in absolutely infallible fashion that *I* am in need of you, *I* require your presence, *I* seek you, *I* implore you, *I* summon you to appear you who are futureless without hands breasts belly vulva thoughts, you at the very moment when you are nothing more than a pressure an insistence within m/y body. You lie on the sea, you enter m/e by the eyes, you arrive in the air *I* breathe, *I* summon you to show yourself, *I* solicit you to emerge from this non-presence which engulfs you. Your eyes perhaps are phosphorescent, your lips are pale m/y much desired one, you torment m/e with a slow love.

We descend directly legs together thighs together arms entwined m/y hands touching your shoulders m/y shoulders held by your hands breast against breast open mouth against open mouth, we descend slowly. The sand swirls round our ankles, suddenly it surrounds our calves. It's from then on that the descent is slowed down. At the moment your knees are reached you throw back your head, *I* see your teeth, your smile, later you look at m/e you speak to m/e without interruption. Now the sand presses on the thighs. *I* shiver with gooseflesh, *I* feel your skin stirring, your nails dig into m/y shoulders, you look m/e, you do not stop looking at m/e, the shape of your cheeks is changed by the greatest concern. The engulfment continues steadily, the touch of the sand is soft against m/y legs. You begin to sigh. When *I* am sucked down to m/y thighs *I* start to cry out, in a few moments *I* shall be unable to touch you, m/y hands on your shoulders your neck will be unable to reach your vulva, anguish grips m/e, the tiniest grain of sand between your belly and m/ine can separate us once for all. But your fierce joyful eyes shining hold m/e against you, you press m/y back with your large hands, *I* begin to throb in m/y eyelids, *I* throb in m/y brain, *I* throb in m/y thorax, *I* throb in m/y belly, *I* throb in m/y clitoris while you speak faster and faster clasping m/e *I* clasping you clasping each other with a marvelous strength, the