



Re-*O*rigin
of
Species

P o e m s

Alessandra Naccarato

Re-Origin
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Mountain That Eats Men

Cerro Rico, Potosí

When I meet the devil, his name is Uncle. Inside
a silver mountain, the *mountain that eats*

men, eight million tibias rest. The old mine shifts
toward an unknown tectonic, nearly bankrupt.

In the underground den, I chew coca leaves
and leave a fifth of vodka at Uncle's feet. It is hard

not to stare at the figure's erection, white flowers,
his small and mighty horns. Dead of black lung

at twenty, these kind men and our great uncles,
the Calabrese poor. Beneath the Canadian Shield,

they prayed to *Playboys* and handkerchiefs,
mostly came home. Here, too many widows,

the tourists gawk. I want to slide inside the shaft
of earth as if greeting an old friend.

What do I know about sacrifice? Outside, they
grace the refinery with blood. Two hundred llamas

split belly to sternum. It has been a good year,
they say. It has been a good year in the mountain.

This Is How You Make a Haunting

It takes three days to panhandle
enough for the bus, and then
your father is already on the shelf
our people use for the dead.

The cat's tail curled around
zucchini stalks, garden purring.
All earthworm and yellow flower,
wet as the day you left home.

Here is the bed. Here is your tag
on the milk-store wall: *Mano Negro*.
Here is your long-haired brother
lifting the cat from the earth.

Hot oil in the pan. Fat mother
at the stove, battering flowers.
Seven years of black cloth, says
she'll learn the language now.

Gives you his coat, the wool
inheritance. Here you are:
thin and shot full of poppies,
black-eyed eldest.

The rock wall leans onto the
highway, you can hear dead river
under your house. Two years
doesn't change the land,

just the body. Where a thorn
pierced your forearm, button
your father's sleeve. Visit his
mausoleum, its sweet quiet.

Your name on the door, blood
inheritance. Put your hand
to the language: here is your body,
here is your way to carry on.

Someday, I'll be that same body,
heaving at the flower's bright stem.
Will need to know how cold
the stone was when you touched it.

How you vomited beside the plot,
shook for days in your old room.
Mother skinning rabbits for soup,
brother holding a spoon of broth
to your small blue mouth.

The Fish

The story is he gives me a fish.
The problem is my hands only hold so much water.
The problem is my hands leak water.
The problem is I want it to keep living.

The setting is a municipal campground.
The setting is not far from the creek.
The setting is Thursday. Muggy, wet evening.
The smell of burning pine.

We turn away from the fire together.
We walk to his tent where the light is slanted.
This is where he gives me the fish.
This is where I can't unhold it.

The story is he's drunk.
The story is his father.
The story is my body should be able to shelter it.
The body rarely does what it's told.

The problem is I want to keep living.
The problem is my hands are not ponds.
The problem is he wants me to keep it.
The story is I give it back to the land.

Land That Erases

When I met her, her skin was clear as obsidian glass.
The cabin rocked like a boat as the wind blew through it.
Her body had been an archipelago, kissed white by rash.
Incurable, they said as she prayed the marks from her.
Needles in the meridians, creams of sheep's gut and steroids.
She lived on a cruise ship then. A co-worker leapt from
the ledge as tourists ate dinner. They could not turn back.
Her job was to sell watches and vitamins, so she wore
long sleeves. Then she heard of an island that devoured
parts of itself. Once there was a town and now there wasn't.
Land sold for the price of a watch, that close to the crater.
It lit her kitchen with a soft red glow.

Imminent Domain

Fissure 18, Leilani Estates

I have been there in a blue dress, in a blue tent
at daybreak. The boar outside my window
had tusks thick as my wrists,

and lying there pregnant
I held a salamander in my hand. A village,
then another village. And another
village soon, when the lava

is done. A friend named Peter
moved rocks to decorate,
and deep in the night was shaken
by the old wives who guard

that place. We want to be forgiven,
by our mothers and the land: re-colonizer kids,
in our deep kisses and rum. I have danced

with swan feathers in my hair, drunk on the new
self I found, warm and taken. The gash
in the earth laughs, the way planets laugh

at girls like me, at Peter. Pregnant, I scaled
chicken wire at the dump,
touched fresh obsidian. It broke in my hand
like black salt;

I took nothing with me. At the estuary,
my aunt wore a gas mask
and washed her feet. Imminent, eminent domain.

The road remembered itself fire,

the lizard dropped its tail. The tail burned
and the road broke free.

One Hundred Ways to Die in Yellowstone

Alcohol poisoning
Approaching wildlife
Arrowhead
Aspen (fall of)
Aspen (fall from)
Aspen (collision with)
Avalanche

Bighorn sheep (horn of)
Bison (charge of)
Bear
Boulder (dislodged)
Brucellosis (bison served in main dining room)

Caldera, supervolcano (accidental entry)
Caldera, supervolcano (entry, push by new husband)
Caldera, supervolcano (eruption)
Caldera, supervolcano (steam)
Choking
Climate change
Concussion (from kick to the head, see: Bighorn sheep)
Coyote attack

Daffodils (consumption of)
Dehydration
Dismemberment (by wildlife)
Dismemberment (by snowplow)
Drowning
Drunk driving

Earthquake
Echinococcus granulosus eggs (through handling of wolf scat)
Elk (stampede of)
Endangered species (attack by)
Endangered species (sale of, resulting in GSW, see: Firearms)
Erosion
Exposure (extreme cold)
Exposure (extreme heat)
Exposure (bad psilocybin in the head cook's cabin)

Falling
Firearms (premeditation)
Firearms (mistaken for deer by wildlife control)
Firearms (see: Suicide)
Forest fire
Forgetfulness

Gangrene
Geyser (bathing in, mistaken for hot spring)
Geyser (falling)
Geyser (diving after family pet)
Grizzly bear (claw of)
Grizzly bear (consumption by)

Hallucinations (sudden onset)
Hallucinations (see: Exposure)
Hemlock
Hitting gas instead of brake
Hurricane
Hypothermia
Hydrothermal pool (see: Geyser)

Icicle (fall of)
Improper storage of food
Infidelity (see: Firearms)

Jumping into thermal pools (see: Geysers)

Kayaking

Landslide

Lightning

Loneliness

Lynx

Lyme disease (see: Climate change)

Listeria

Mountain lion

Moose (kick by)

Monkshood

Narcolepsy

Obsidian rock (fall from)

Obsidian rock (fall of)

Off-road travel by ATV

Oleander

Picnicking in proximity of wildlife

Poisonous mushroom mistaken for chanterelle

Quail (distraction by, while hiking)

Quarter-life crisis

Rattlesnake

Speeding

Snowmobile

STI/STD (contracted in the ranger lodge, left untreated)

Suicide (see: Loneliness)

Sudden collapse of road

Tree branch (fall from)

Tree branch (fall of)

Tree pose (Vrksasana) by a thermal pool (see: Geyser, Falling)

Unanimous group decision to swim at night, drunk

Unreported injury

Venom (see: Rattlesnake)

Water hemlock (mistaken for parsnip)

Wolf

Wolf scat (see: Echinococcus)

Wolverine pack

Whirling disease (consumption of trout with)

Winter

Wildlife viewing

Xenophobia

Xanax (use of, in presence of wildlife)

Youthful sense of entitlement

Zip lines