

# **EUGÉNIO DE ANDRADE**

**HOMAGE TO MARK ROTHKO  
WINTER FLAME  
ABOUT YEATS' WILD SWANS  
BRIEF REPORT  
PERPENDICULAR LIGHT**

## HOMAGE TO MARK ROTHKO

Yellow, orange, lemon,  
then carmine: everything burns  
in the sands  
between the palm trees and the sea-- it was summer.  
But in the place of your name  
the earth has the color of a pensive  
green, that only night  
lightly puts to pasture.

## WINTER FLAME

The flame. The lowly flame. And still  
the flame. It comes from so far. From the simple  
house upon the threshing floor,  
the house where something little  
pulsed: a heart,  
the water in the big jug,  
the wheat as it grew.  
I was so small I didn't even know  
how to ask for an orange,  
a bit of bread.  
Even less, a kiss.  
It seemed I only knew  
how to reach out my hands toward that low-lying  
sun and towards the gaze  
that protected it  
from the enchantments of the flame.

## ABOUT YEATS' WILD SWANS

Night falls so early now-- I am afraid  
of losing you in the dark.  
I remember the wild swans  
that rose up sovereign from the lake  
lighting up the waters and the autumn  
sky at close of day.  
They too get lost  
now as the shadow leans.  
What country will be mine? This one,  
where I live and am a stranger?  
That of the light crossed  
by the swans? Without you, how can I know?

## BRIEF REPORT

You will leave the house unfinished.  
There will be windows in the walls unopened  
to the first,  
to the last dusk.  
In the still sweet air, leaning  
against the wall, the lemon tree  
will blossom once again for no one's gaze.  
In the garden one or another flower hangs on.  
Perhaps someone will pass by and say to himself:  
How good the gillyflowers smell!

## PERPENDICULAR LIGHT

If hands were able (yours,  
mine) to tear away the fog,  
and enter perpendicular light.  
If the voice were to come. Not any one:  
yours, and in the morning were to fly.  
And sing in jubilation.  
With your hands, and mine,  
if it could penetrate the blue, any  
blue: that of the sea,  
of the sky, of the humble little song  
of flowing water. And rise with them.  
(The bird, the hands, the voice.)  
And turn to flame. Or almost.