

# **GALO GHIGLIOTTO**

**FROM VALDIVA**

**TRANSLATED BY DANIEL BORZUTZKY**

25

one night i went to speak  
with the scriptwriter who was crafting my dreams  
i asked him not to write any more nightmares  
he told me he couldn't stop because that's  
how it was written in the book of zombies  
i insisted that he free me  
he told me  
it's time i take control  
of my own dreams that it was time i realize  
that his god was an ancestor of mine  
that in this life you can do anything  
except die  
he advised me to not get frustrated  
if at first my dreams broke open when i touched them  
he told me that this destruction  
is a symptom of inexperience  
he told me that in Valdivia it would be very hard for me  
because those who die frustrated invade  
other people's dreams in order to resurrect  
because as soon as they start to enter the dreams of the person they have picked  
they try to complete the dreams they left unfinished when they died  
he told me that the Calle Calle is not a river  
it's a parade of white dresses that float  
in a procession to the sea

he said all of this and much more  
other things i don't remember but i know  
that even though i don't remember them they are there  
the scriptwriter of my dreams told me these things and he took off  
on an elephant  
facing me  
followed by a flock of green goats  
jumping next to it  
at which point i realized we were at the bottom of the river  
but i was breathing normally  
at last i was breathing  
normally  
at the bottom of the river

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those clowns have fangs  
they are a few meters away from me  
they haven't seen me  
sometimes there are four sometimes there are hundreds  
they transform and multiply  
they laugh they fight  
they knock back bottles of blood  
their mouths are red from their teeth spill  
little threads that sparkle  
with a light that leads to i don't know where  
i move one of them looks at me and then  
they pulse stroboscopic stares over me  
they approach me a wall appears stuck to my back  
i hear their jabbering as they walk towards me  
they clean their mouths and fangs  
with their long and sharp tongues  
the walls are suddenly next to me  
and i get stuck between someone's thighs  
saber toothed clowns come towards me  
jabbering  
tossing off grotesque and keen cackles  
beneath their painted eyes  
their red mouths  
the gazes that sparkle  
silvery plains  
like shards of a foggy or empty mirror  
like shards of a piercing or starving mirror

27

last night i dreamt was the devil  
and i had amazing powers  
i could transform  
men into women and vice-versa  
i could turn humans into ghosts  
and give the ghosts back their flesh  
i could move objects from one place to another  
just by pointing my finger at them  
i could make anything appear

i was sitting with a group of people  
and they were asking if i wasn't ashamed  
to be the devil  
i told them i wasn't and i tried to explain to them  
that i wasn't the devil but just one of many  
but it was a lie so i thought it best to keep quiet  
or just to say no                      i wasn't ashamed

someone asked me for  
a photo album lost thousands of years ago  
and instantly i made it appear

a man told me his young daughter  
had died a long time ago  
and that he missed her so much  
and so i slowly turned my head  
following the line of the horizon  
and i could see                      inside some houses  
where old films were projected on the walls  
i saw the father and his daughter playing  
on a patio that is now this building  
i saw them construct it  
a house in the only tree on the street  
and i also saw the ghost of the young girl glowing in the night  
walking on the tree branches  
sadly pretending to feed dead chicks  
inside a house as ghostly as she was

so i said to the father  
*climb up on this building and jump over to that tree*  
he believed in me and he did it  
and the moment he touched the foliage he turned into the ghost  
of a young father who he himself was  
and he fell into the house that was shining  
like a translucent cube made of radiant lines  
and they hugged each other so much  
that i had to pause time for the living  
in order to see the entire embrace  
it lasted five hundred years  
and from its tears were born  
the sea and the rivers of Valdivia

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last night i dreamt i was the devil  
but i was good  
i found a dwelling for the lost souls  
and sealed them in beer bottles  
which i distributed throughout the city of Valdivia

28

one night i went to speak to  
the scriptwriter who wrote my dreams  
i asked him to kill me while i slept  
and to leave me locked in the images of sunflowers rubbing  
with the brilliance of the sky  
in the whisper of our true names  
through the wind's mouth

the river bank

i offered him my god as a sacrifice  
i promised to revere him in the world where he left me  
i told him that just like the creator of the heavens and the earth  
i was a child lost in the universe  
who needed to invent his own parents  
i told him i no longer wanted Valdivia  
to be the name of my genealogy  
but he told me everything was predetermined long ago  
from long ago he told me remember  
the divine vicious circle  
he told me  
perhaps a message at the moment of escape  
but the rest is written  
in the book of zombies  
that you yourself wrote  
long before you were born  
you yourself wrote it