

ACCIÓN DE GRACIAS CRÓNICA

Susana Chávez-Silverman

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Trailhead, cerca de Mt. Baldy

For you, Montenegro

CIELO el color del “graphite” crayon en el giant Crayola box. Heavy, low, dark. Every so often, un anémico rayo de sol cracks through. Hay una sutil brisa, bearing uncanny frankincense, I promise you, junto con el más expected, post-wildfire smoke. Sage. Lemon eucalyptus.

The sky is *just* as it was ese late invierno en San Francisco, mientras yo esperaba. Waited to be with you, de nuevo. Waited for your words. Hungry, hambrienta, oh *honger*, el hambre abierta, not sated ni siquiera quelled, mientras me iban llegando: cartas de amor, phone calls, fotos con tus lapidary inscriptions, tus dedications al dorso: todo un epistolario en miniatura.

Now I wait—de nuevo—for you.

Any medium of my choice, you wrote me some days ago, and you’d be *right* there. Digo, here. See? Here are your words:

You know me – I would have responded promptly to any missive received through whatever medium you had chosen.

So, OK, bebé. Heme aquí. ¿Dónde coño estás? I chafe. I paw, I prance.

Como estos roan caballos, al costado derecho del trail.

Energy to burn, engullo el health-trail: three miles in 36 minutes, a near-record for me. *Ag* Howard, I *burn* with impatience now, tal y como ardía entonces, en San Francisco, durante esos intervals with no sign from you which were probably oh . . . ¿quizás tres o cuatro días, at *most* a week. Y estamos hablando de los días a puro pan y agua, hey? The South African and the U.S. postal system; ATT international phone calls; nada de e-mail, ni mucho *menos* los textuales. Or sms's, as you call them.

Intento recordarme que este nuestro incongruously . . . *resumed* love/story (but then again it *isn't*, after all, all *that* incongruous: so say nuestras estrellas or, as mi-entonces roommate la Trish used to say: "Suzi, you and Howie babe are slated!" Remember?) has no doubt unsettled you, *bigtime*. Por lo menos you *finally* admitted that, hace unos días. Tú, mi *Bok Boytjie*, con tu cautious, duty-full M.O. Pero anygüey, *whatever* was stymying our "comms," as you call them, I'm here now. Te escribo. So send me a sign, Montenegro. By *any* medium. *Your* choice.

Soy barroca, excesiva. Too-impatient. I cop to that. Pero you've always known and accepted—*loved*, even—este defecto mío. Eso me lo escribiste back in May, when we reconnected. Digo: reconnected de adiverzas. Not just the "news 'n' views" *kak*, como dices. You know: kids, jobs, divorces, books.

Seems *aeons* ago already . . . cuando te escribí, cuando te escribía, te leía en esa glass-walled tree-*huis* en el Montalvo Arts Center, up in NorCal. Nuestro Emerald Forest.

Rain is pouring down now. Caen gordas gotas lentas. Se deslizan rítmicamente en el windscreen as I sit here en el auto, at trail's end, and write to you en mi little cuadernito de viaje, con el Golden Gate Bridge en la tapa. Antaño yo miraba por esas bamboo-slatted bay windows (oh, éramos poor students entonces, la Trish y yo) at 2370 Chestnut St, #212. Ese romantic, cozy old-fashioned, sparsely-furnished room donde comenzó nuestro amor. *Onthou jy?* Rain poured and poured, I remember it raining much more back then, fog rolled into the Marina and I wrote to you, todos los días te escribía, from my island bed.

Each letter from you now—e-mail, digo—however elliptical, however laconic o al grano (“concise,” you would correct me), I *know* is a dizzying paso doble of intimacy, un atrevidísimo letting-down-of-the-guard for you. Even as you started out back then, ¿te acuerdas? Y ahora de nuevo: 25 years later. Ahora, according to you, eres como Rip van Winkle. Yawning and stretching, waking up, espabilándote después de una decades-long, fuera de práctica emo-siesta.

Te sientes medio overwhelmed, I shouldn’t wonder, por tu hungry, decisive, passionate Mars in Aries en la Casa 7. La parte de tu natal chart que prende fuego. Every quarter-siglo or so, hey? it lights a fire under that oh-so-*double* Capricornio, Mr. Cool exterior.

¿Pero yo? Yo soy una emo-Girl: a Grand Trine in Fire, straight-up junkie for your love, Montenegro. More, más. Siempre. Más.