

Sonnet VI

by Pablo Neruda

traduit d'espagnole par Anisa Maya Dhanji

En los bosques, perdido, corté una rama oscura

Dans la forêt, perdu, je disloquai une brindille obscure

In the forest, lost, I broke off a sombre twig

y a los labios, sediento, levanté su susurro:

et aux lèvres, assoiffées, je levai un murmure:

and to the lips, thirsty, i lifted a murmur:

era tal vez la voz de la lluvia llorando,

c'était peut-être la voix de la pluie qui pleurait

it was maybe the voice of the crying rain

una campana rota o un corazón cortado.

une cloche fissurée ou un cœur déchiré.

a fractured bell or a torn heart.

Algo que desde tan lejos me parecía

Quelque chose qui sembla si loin à moi

Something that seemed so far from me

oculto gravemente, cubierto por la tierra,

profond et secret, caché par la terre,

deep and secret, buried by the earth

un grito ensordecido por inmensos otoños,

un cri qui était assourdi par d'immenses automnes,

a cry deafened by vast autumns,

por la entreabierta y húmeda tiniebla de las hojas.

par l'obscurité humide et semi-ouverte des feuilles.

by the damp and half-open obscurity of the leaves

Pero allí, despertando de los sueños del bosque,

Mais là-bas, s'éveillant des rêves de la forêt,

But there, waking from the forest's dreams,

la rama de avellano cantó bajo mi boca

la branchette noisette chanta sous ma langue

the hazelnut sprig sang under my tongue

y su errabundo olor trepó por mi criterio

et sa fragrance errante noya mon jugement

and its wandering fragrance flooded my judgement



como si me buscaran de pronto las raíces

comme si soudainement, elles me cherchèrent, mes racines

as if suddenly, they were searching for me, my roots

que abandoné, la tierra perdida con mi infancia

que j'abandonna, la terre perdue avec mon enfance

that I abandoned, the earth lost with my childhood

y me detuve herido por el aroma errante.

et je m'arrêtai, blessé par l'arôme égaré

and I stopped, wounded by the stray aroma.

Anisa's Translation Process:

"As we, the readers move through the telling of Neruda's, Soneto VI, we notice that the theme of disconnect manifests in both the poem's syntax and the narrative itself. The French translation presented here was prepared by working closely with the original poem, written in Spanish. Although I have little experience using the Spanish language, I used my linguistic knowledge, readings of various English renditions and aid from a dear friend to guide my interpretations of this text.

Intending to trace the shape of disconnect while respecting the original's structure, I mirrored Neruda's punctuation and phrasal placements where possible. The broken rhythm of the poem unfolds in this way beginning with the very first line, continuing throughout.

Additionally, I carefully chose vocabulary to reveal the sensation of disconnect felt in the original narrative, particularly experienced in the second and last stanzas. A meaningful translation of Soneto VI would be to remain faithful to Neruda's first version while mapping the sensation of loss and distance.

The thoughtful art of translation allows us to reflect on the fluidity of literature as it passes through different languages. Working with both the Spanish original and English renditions taught me that it is not only the conscious choices we make as translators, but also the diverse linguistic structures which inform many valuable interpretations of socio-cultural nuances weaved into poetry—as in this reading of a lost childhood."

