

Tócame algo de *John Berger*

Play Me Something

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Inglés

What is it that men have and women don't and which is hard and long?

On your left is the city of Verona, announced the bus driver over the loudspeaker. Verona was conquered by the Ostrogoths, later by the Barbarians, and still later by the Austrians. In the fourteenth century Verona was the setting of the love story between Romeo and Juliet.

What is that men have and women don't and which is hard and long?

Tell us! demanded the boys.

Military service!

The flatness of the surrounding countryside was unfamiliar, making it difficult to judge distances. The coach was traveling fast, yet it seemed that time passed and nothing changed.

You see their maize? They are two months ahead of us.

Finally the coach crossed the motor causeway to the Queen of the Cities. In the vaporetto the men stood up very straight, as if on parade. This was because they were reminded of the first time they had left the village as conscripts in the army. The woman lounged on the deck seats, and the younger ones pulled up their skirts to bare their legs to the sun. The vaporetto swayed first to one side and then to the other, like a woman pedaling very slowly on a bicycle.

How would you like a white suit like the ship's captain?

Look at those insects!

Where?

There!

She's been drinking!

He must change it every day.

Look! Along the water line.

Good God, yes, thousands of them.

They come up for the sun.

They are crabs.

Galego

Que é aquilo que os homes teñen e as mulleres non, e que é duro e delongado?

Á vosa dereita atópase a cidade de Verona, anunciou o chofer do autocarro polo altofalante. Verona foi conquistada polos ostrogodos e máis tarde polos bárbaros e aínda despois polos austriacos. No século catorce Verona foi o escenario da historia de amor entre Romeu e Xulieta.

Que é aquilo que os homes teñen e as mulleres non, e que é duro e delongado?

Dínolo!, demandaron os rapaces.

O servizo militar!

O chairo da paisaxe á súa volta éralles estraño; facía difícil xulgar as distancias. O autocarro estaba a rodar con rapidez, nembargantes semellaba que o tempo pasaba e nada mudaba.

Vistes o seu millo? Van dous meses por diante de nós.

Finalmente, o autocarro cruzou a ponte da autoestrada cara a raíña das cidades. No *vaporetto*, os homes ficaron de pé, moi ergueitos, coma nun desfile. Isto era así porque se lembraron da primeira vez que deixaron a aldea coma recrutas do exército. As mulleres estarricáronse nos asentos da cuberta e as máis novas arremangaban as súas saias para espir as pernas ao sol. O *vaporetto* abalou primeiro para unha beira e logo para a outra, coma unha muller a pedalexar moi de vagariño nunha bicicleta.

Habiades gostar dun traxe branco coma o do capitán do barco?

Olla para eses insectos!

Onde?

Alá!

Esta xa che estivo a encher!

Debe mudalo a cotío.

Olla! A rentes da auga.

Meu Deus, si, milleiros deles.

Soben á procura do sol.

Son cangrexos.

I've never seen crabs that size.
 You don't know what to look at.
 I tell you, it looks like a flood.
 You couldn't make cheese here!

They disembarked at the Piazza San Marco and climbed the circular staircase of the Campanile. Afterwards the men were thirsty and insisted upon having a drink in one of the cafés on the piazza, which Napoleon called the largest ballroom in Europe.

It costs more to piss here than to drink a whole case at home!

Inside the café he noticed a poster announcing a festival organised by L'Unità, the Communist daily newspaper. Why not?

They crossed the Bridge of Sighs and stopped beneath a statue of Eve in the courtyard of the Doge's Palace.

It's a wife like that you need!

Later the men climbed onto the terrace of the Cathedral of San Marco to look at the horses.

The festival was to be held on the island of Giudecca. From the Doge's palace he could see the coloured lights decorating the building across the water and from time to time he heard a strain of music.

If you are not at the bus station by two, we will know they drowned you.

He is more adventurous than the rest of you men!

He sat in the stern of the vaporetto with his instrument case on his knees.

You are not from here.

These words were addressed to him by a young woman with magenta lipstick and white sandals.

How is that?

You look too quiet.

You know what I have in this box?

She looked her head. She had glasses and her black hair was drawn back in a chignon.

A trombone.

It is not true, she cried. Play it! Please, play me something.

Not here on the boat, he said. Are you going to the festival?

If you brought it with you, you must have had the idea of playing it.

We came from the mountains. I didn't want to leave it in the bus.

Around her neck was a white necklace.

You, do you live down here?

In Mestri, across the bay, where the oil tanks are. And you —I'd say you work on a farm.

How do you know?

Eu nunca che vin cangrexos dese tamaño.

Ti non sabes para onde has ollar, ho.

Xa cho dixen, semella unha enchenta.

Non poderiades facer queixos aquí!

Desembarcaron na *Piazza de San Marco* e rubiron polas escadarías de caracol da *Campanile*. Logo aos homes deulles a sede e teimaron en botaren un grolíño nun dos cafés da *piazza* á que Napoleón chamou o máis grande salón de baile de Europa.

Custa máis mexar aquí que beber un garrafón enteiriño na casa!

Dentro do *café* reparou nun cartaz que anunciaba un festival organizado por *L'a Unità*, o xornal comunista. E por que non?

Cruzaron a ponte dos suspiros e pararon por baixo da estatua de Eva, no patio do Pazo dos Dogos.

O que ti precisas é unha muller coma esa!

Logo os homes rubiron á terraza da Catedral de San Marco para lle botaren unha ollada aos cabalos.

O festival íase celebrar na illa de Giudecca. Dende o Pazo dos Dogos podía ver as luces a cores decorando os predios do outro lado da canle e ás veces podía ouvir retallos de música.

Se non estás na estación de autocarros ás dúas, habemos saber que eles te afogaron.

Éche máis aventureiro có resto de vós rapaces!

Sentou na popa do *vaporetto* co estoxo do instrumento nos xeonllos.

Ti non es de por aquí.

Estas verbas fóronlle dirixidas por unha muller nova cos beizos pintados de maxenta e sandalias brancas.

E logo como o sabes?

Semellas moi caladiño.

Sabes o que hai nesta caixa?

Ela abaneou a cabeza. Levaba lentes e o seu cabelo negro estaba recollido para atrás nun moño.

Un trombón.

Non tal, berrou ela. Tócao! Por favor toca algo.

Aquí no barco, non, dixo el. Vas ao festival?

Se o trouxeches canda ti, será porque tiñas idea de o tocares.

Vimos das montañas. Non o quería deixar no autocarro.

Había un colar branco ao redor do seu pescozo.

E ti, vives por aquí?

En Mestri, do outro lado da badía, onda os depósitos de petróleo. E ti... eu diría que traballas nunha granxa.

E como o sabes?

I can smell the cows.
 If she had been a man, he would have hit her.
 What do you think I smell of?
 Scent.
 Correct. I work in a chemist's shop.
 One look at your hands told me you didn't work
 with them.
 Do you know what my father calls that?
 No.
 Infantile proletarianism.
 He said nothing. Perhaps it was a Venetian ex-
 pression.

The vaporetto was approaching the island.
 Hung from the first-storey windows on the far side
 of the piazza were banderolas with slogans printed
 on them. He could make out the hammer and sickle.
 As he stepped ashore, he held his instrument
 case tightly under his arm. The festival, he reminded
 himself, was organised by the Communist
 Party, but this did not mean there were no thieves
 there. He could spot them already.

Do you like dancing? she asked.

I can't dance carrying this.

Give it to me.

She disappeared with his instrument case into
 one of the nearby buildings.

And if it's stolen? he said, when she came
 empty-handed.

Comrade, she replied, this is a workers' festival,
 and workers do not steal from one another.

Peasants do! he said.

What is your name?

Bruno. And yours?

Marietta.

He held up his arm for her to take his hand. He
 did not dance like a man from here, she thought.
 He was more single-minded, as if, when dancing,
 he put everything else out of his mind.

What is it like on your mountain?

There are rhodos and wild goats.

Rhodos?

Little bushes of flowers.

Pink?

Blood-red.

How do they vote in your village?

For the right.

And you?

I vote for anyone who promises to raise the
 price of the milk.

That isn't good for the workers.

Milk is all we have to sell.

They were dancing round a plane tree in a corner
 of the piazza. In the tree was a loudspeaker,
 perched like an owl on one of the branches.

Podo cheirar as vacas.
 Se fose un home, habíalle ter zoupado.
 A que pensas que ulo eu?
 A perfume.
 Pois si. Traballo nunha droguería.
 Con lle botar unha ollada ás túas mans logo me
 decatei de que ti non traballabas con elas.
 Sabes como lle chama o meu pai a iso?
 Non.
 Proletarismo infantil.
 El non dixo ren. Se cadra era un falar de Venecia.

O *vaporetto* achegábase á illa. Había bandeiro-
 las penduradas das fiestras do primeiro andar con
 eslogans escritos neles no cabo máis afastado da
piazza. Puido enxergar o martelo e máis a fouce.
 Ao desembarcar, amarróu o estoxo do seu instru-
 mento con forza debaixo do seu brazo. O festival,
 lembrou, estaba organizado polo Partido
 Comunista, pero iso non quería dicir que alí non
 houbera ladróns. Xa case os podía uliscar.

Gostas de bailar?, preguntoulle ela.

Non podo bailar se levo isto comigo.

Dámo a min.

Desapareceu co estoxo cara a un dos predios
 máis afastados.

E se o rouban?

Camarada, retrucou ela, esta éche a festa dos
 traballadores e os traballadores non se rouban os
 uns aos outros.

Pois os labregos fancho!

Como te chamas?

Bruno. E ti?

Marietta.

El soergueu o seu brazo para que ela termase da
 súa man. Non baila como os homes de aquí, pen-
 sou ela. El era máis afouto, coma se, ao bailar,
 afastase todo o demais da súa mente.

Como é a túa montaña?

Hai rododendros e cabras do monte.

Rododendros?

Pequenas matogueiras con flores.

Rosas?

Dun vermello sangue.

A quen votan na túa vila?

Á direita.

E ti?

Eu voto por calquera que prometa subir o prezo
 do leite.

Iso non é bo para os traballadores.

Leite é todo o que temos para vendermos.

Bailaban ao redor dun plataneiro nun canto da
piazza. Na árbore había un altofalante, empoleira-
 do coma un moucho nunha das gallas.

You came here alone? she asked.

With the whole band.

A band of friends?

The brass band of the village.

The next time the owl felt silent he proposed that they should have a drink. She guided him to a table beneath a gigantic portrait, drawn on a sheet and hung from the tops windows of a house. The painted face was so large that even the flanks of the nose had been drawn with a six-inch house-painter's brush. They looked up at it together.

Do you live alone? she asked.

Yes, I've lived alone for eight years. A fifth of my life.

She liked the way he hesitated before speaking, it was very deliberate, as if each time he answered one of her questions, he came to the door of a house, opened it to a visitor, and then spoke.

How many mirrors do you have at home? She asked this as if it were a schoolgirl's riddle.

He paused to count.

One over the sink, one over the drinking trough outside.

She laughed. He poured out more white wine.

That's Karl Marx, isn't it? He nodded to at the sheet.

Marx was a great prophet. What do you see in the future? she asked.

The rich getting richer.

I mean your future.

Mine? Everything depends upon my health.

You don't look sick to me.

If you are sent to the hospital when you are sick, your dog doesn't look after your cows. I live alone.

She raised her glass to his. I think I could find you a work in Mestri.

He was looking at her small feet, thinking: everything between a man and a woman is a question of how much you give up of one thing to have another. An exchange.

You are bound to be influenced by the property relations of which you are a part. Her voice was tender, as if she were explaining something intimate. The *Kulaks* sided with the bourgeoisie, and the little peasants with the little bourgeoisie. You are wrong to think only about the price of the milk.

She comes, he told himself, from this place of water and islands where there is no earth at all.

The fact is peasants will disappear, she continued, the future lies elsewhere.

I'd like to have children, he said.

Viñeches só?, preguntoulle ela.

Con toda a banda.

Unha banda de amigos?

Non, a banda de música da vila.

Ao que o moucho calou novamente, el propúxolle botaren un grolo. Ela guiouno cara a unha das mesas por baixo dun xigantesco retrato, debuxado nunha saba pendurada das xanelas do último andar dunha casa. A faciana pintada era tan inxente que mesmo as beiras do nariz foran tracexadas cunha brocha de pintor de seis polegadas. Ollaron xuntos para ela.

Vives só?, preguntoulle ela.

Si, levo vivindo só os últimos oito anos. Un quinto da miña vida.

Gostaba do xeito no que el dubidaba antes de falar, era moi deliberado, coma se, cada vez que respostaba a algunha das súas preguntas, se achegase á porta dunha casa, lla abrise a un visitante e despois falase.

Cantos espellos tes na túa casa? Preguntoulle isto coma se se tratase dunha adiviña de nena de escola.

El parouse a contalos.

Un sobre o lavabo, outro fóra, no bebedeiro.

Ela riu. Botou máis viño branco.

Este é Karl Marx, non si? E acenou coa súa testa cara a saba.

Marx foi un grande profeta. Como ves o futuro?, preguntoulle ela.

Os ricos hanse facer cada vez máis ricos.

Quero dicir o teu futuro.

O meu? Todo depende da miña saúde.

Non che me parece que esteas doente.

Se te mandan ao hospital cando estás doente, o teu can non ha mirar polas vacas. Eu vivo só.

Ela levantou o seu copo cara ao del. Coido que che podería atopar un choio en Mestri.

El estaba a reparar nos seus pequenos pés, mantinando: entre un home e unha muller todo é unha cuestión de a canto estás disposto a renunciar nunha cousa para conseguires algo. Un troco.

Non che queda outra que ficates influenciado polas relacións de propiedade das que fas parte. A súa voz era tenra, coma se estivese a debullar algo íntimo. Os *Kulaks* puxéronse do lado da burguesía, e os pequenos labregos fixérono coa pequena burguesía. Trabúcaste ao pensares só no prezo do leite.

Ela vén, díxose para el mesmo, dese lugar de auga e illas onde non hai terra ningunha.

O feito é que os labregos han desaparecer, continuou ela, o futuro pasa por outro sitio.

Gostaríade ter fillos, dixo el.

You have to find a wife.
 He poured out more wine.
 You'd find a wife if you moved here.
 I'd cut off my right hand rather than work in a factory.

All the men dancing there, she said, they're nearly all factory workers.

He had never seen so many men in white shirts. They wore their shirts tied around their waist to show off their stomachs. They were as cunning as weasels. Their cuffs were rolled back only half-way up their forearms, as if they had just got out of bed.

Do they caress well? he asked.
 Who?
 The weasels over there.
 Caress?
 What a man should do to a woman.
 Let's dance, she said.
 The owl was hooting a tango.
 Who's milking the cows tonight? she whispered.

Who am I dancing with?

Marietta is dancing with Bruno, she said, as he pulled her hand up and looked along their arms, as if taking aim with a gun.

As the tempo increased they advanced and turned more and more quickly. People began to watch them. His shirt and his heavy shoes announced he was from the country. But he danced well, they made a couple. Some of the bystanders began to clap in time with the music. It was like watching a duel. A duel between the paving stones and their four feet. How long would they keep it up?

Now they were walking down a narrow street, with old men on wicker chairs, and grandmothers playing with balloons to amuse their grandchildren. At the end of the street was suspended another gigantic portrait: a great domed head, like a beehive of thought, wearing glasses.

That's Gramsci.

He put his arm round her shoulders so that she could lean her head against his damp flannel shirt.

Antonio Gramsci, she said. He taught us all.

You wouldn't mistake him for a horse dealer! he said.

Past the portrait, they came to a cobbled quayside overlooking the lagoon toward Murano. In places grass had grown over cobbles. He stared across the black water and she, carrying her sandals, wandered over to an abandoned gondola,

Tes que atopar unha muller.

El botou máis viño.

Habías atopar unha muller se viñeses para acá.

Había decepar a miña man dereita antes que traballar nunha fábrica.

Todos os homes que están a bailar aquí, dixo ela, case todos eles traballan nunha fábrica.

El nunca vira antes tantos homes con camisas brancas. Levaban as súas camisas atadas ao redor da súa cintura para amosar os seus ventres. Eran tan raposeiros coma donicelas. Os seus puños estaban refucidos só ata a metade dos antebrazos, coma se viñesen de se botar fóra da cama.

Agariman ben?

Quen?

As donicelas aquelas de alá.

Agarimar?

O que un home debería facerlle a unha muller.

Imos bailar?

O moucho uivaba un tango.

Quen está a muxir as vacas esta noite?, segredoulle ela.

Con quen estou eu a danzar?

Marietta está a bailar con Bruno, dixo mentres el erguía a man da rapaza e paseaba a ollada ao longo dos seus brazos, coma se estivese a apontar cunha arma.

Mentres o ritmo se avivecía, eles ían avanzando e virando máis e máis rápidos. A xente deu en ollar para eles. A súa camisa e os seus pesados zapatos anunciaban que el viña do campo. Pero bailaba con moito xeito e facían boa parella. Algúns dos espectadores comezaron a bater palmas ao ritmo da música. Era como contemplar un duelo. Un duelo contra os lastros e os seus catro pés. Canto tempo serían quen de manter o seu esforzo?

Agora ían camiñando por unha rúa estreita, con homes vellos sentados en cadeiras de vimbio e avoas xogando con globos para entreter os seus netos. No final da rúa, había un xigantesco retrato pendurado: unha grande testa abovedada, coma unha colmea de pensamento con lentes.

Este é Gramsci.

El pousou o seu brazo ao redor dos seus ombreiros de tal xeito que ela puidese encostar a súa cabeza á súa camisa de flanela, húmida.

Antonio Gramsci, dixo ela. El aprendéunolo todo.

Non habería quen cho confundise cun tratante de cabalos!

Deixado atrás o retrato, chegaron a un peirao empedrado que daba á lagoa, cara a Murano. Nalgúns cachos a herba medrara por riba dos croios. El botoulle unha ollada á negrexada auga e ela, termando das súas sandalias, achegouse a unha

moored by the corner of the *Rio di Santa Eufemia*. She sat down on the platform by the stern near the wooden oarlock. Sun and water had stripped the gondola of its paint, which was now wood grey. It must once have belonged to a wine merchant, for several demijohns lay on their sides in the prow.

Do you think they are empty? she asked him.

Instead of answering, he jumped into the gondola, which rocked violently. Making his way forward to the prow, he did his best to correct every lurch by leaning in the opposite direction, like someone dancing in a conga line.

Sit down, for God's sake, sit down! she shouted.

She was crouching in the bottom of the boat. Its sides were smacking the water and splashing the air.

He picked up a demijohn and held it against the sky with one hand as if wringing the neck of a goose.

Empty! he boomed.

Sit! she shrieked. Sit!

This is how they found themselves lying on the rush mat in the bottom of the gondola. After a while the smacking of the water ceased and a quiet lapping took its place. Yet the calm did not last long. Soon the gondola was again lurching from side to side with water dripping from its gunwales and its staves thumping the lagoon.

If we capsize, can you swim? she whispered.

No.

Yes, Bruno, yes, yes, yes...

Afterwards they lay on their backs, panting.

Look at the stars. Don't they make you feel small? she said.

The stars look down at us, she continued, and sometimes I think everything, everything except killing, everything takes so long because they are so far away.

His other hand was trailing in the water. Her teeth bit his ear.

The world changes so slowly.

His hand from the water grasped her breast.

One day there'll be no more classes. I believe that, don't you? she murmured and pulled his head down to her other breast.

There's always been good and bad, she said.

We're making progress, don't you believe that?

All our ancestors asked the same thing, he said, you and I will never know in this life why it was made the way it is.

He entered her again. The gondola smacked the water and splashed the air.

When they crossed the narrow island to the pierhead, where the last *vaporetto* would stop, the

gondola abandonada, abarloada preto dunha revolta do *Río di Santa Eufemia*. Sentou na cuberta de popa, preto da toleteira de madeira. O sol e a auga foran desposuíndo a gondola da súa pintura, que era agora dun gris madeira. Nalgún momento debía ter pertencido a un mercader de viño, a vulgar polos varios garrafóns a ambas as dúas beiras de proa.

Pensas que están baleiras?, preguntoulle ela.

No canto de respostar choutou cara á gondola que balanzou violentamente. Mentres camiñaba cara á proa, fixo o mellor que puido para corrixir cada bandazo botándose cara ao lado contrario, coma alguén bailando a conga nunha fileira.

Senta, por amor de Deus, senta!, berrou ela.

Estaba anicada no fondo da nao. Os costados axitaban a auga e a auga zarrapicaba o ar.

El apañou un garrafón e ergueuno cara o ceo cunha man, coma se lle estivese a retorcer o pescozo a un ganso.

Baleiro!, estoupou.

Senta, berrou. Senta.

Foi deste xeito como os dous acabaron deitados nas esteiras no fondo da gondola. De alí a un cacho a axitación da auga acougou e un quedo arrollar ocupou o seu lugar. Con todo, a calmaria non durou moito. De contado a gondola deu en se acanear de beira a beira novamente, coa auga pingado pola borda e as aduelas batendo na lagoa.

Se envorcamos, sabes nadar?, segredoulle ela.

Non.

Si, Bruno, si, si, si...

Logo ficaron deitados de costas, arfando.

Olla para as estrelas. Non che fan sentíreste ben pequeno? dixo ela.

As estrelas ollan para nós, engadiu, e ás veces penso que todo, todoño, agás matar, demora tanto tempo porque elas están moi lonxe.

Coa súa outra man el andaba a facer ronseis na auga. Ela mordeulle a orella cos seus dentes.

O mundo muda tan de vagar.

Vinda da auga, a man apañou un dos seus peitos.

Un día non haberá máis clases. Eu créoch, e ti?, murmurexou mentres empurraba a cabeza del cara ao outro peito.

Sempre houbo ben e mal.

Estamos a facer progresos, non cho parece?

Todos os nosos devanceiros fixéronse a mesma pregunta, dixo el; ti e máis eu nunca habemos saber nesta vida por que foi feito deste xeito.

Penetrouna outravolta. A gondola axitou a auga e a auga zarrapicou o ar.

Mentres cruzaban a estreita illa cara ao peirao, onde o último *vaporetto* había facer a súa parada,

music was over. Only a few drunks, immobile as statues, remained in the piazza. Marietta went to fetch his instrument case. He gazed across the lagoon. He could see the bell-tower they had climbed. The guide said it had toppled over at the beginning of the century. No roots. He remembered the date: 14th July 1902, the year of his father's birth. To the right there were still lights in the Doge's Palace. According to the guide, the Palace had been destroyed or partly destroyed by fire seven times. There had never been peace in that building. Too much power and no roots. One day it would be robbed and pillaged and after that it would be used as a hen house.

Marietta handed him his instrument case.

Play for me. Play me something.

He put the case down on the quayside. Out of his pocket he took a small mouth organ, and turning toward the Doge's Palace, began to play. The music was speaking to him.

Before it is light.

She was staring at his back, relaxed and downcast like the back of a man peeing, except that his hands were to his mouth.

—Before it is light... when you've dressed and gone into the stable—

With her finger she was touching the nape of his neck.

—the animals are lying there—

She was pressing her hand between his shoulder blades and could feel his lungs and the music in the roof of his mouth.

—lying there on the beech leaves, and your tiredness like a child you have dragged from its sleep—

Her hand felt under the belt of his trousers.

—and through the window you see the span of the stars—

She noticed that one of his bootlaces was undone. She knelt down to tie it for him.

—the span of the stars into whose well we are thrown at birth like salt into water—

a música xa rematara. Só unha gavela de bébedos, inmóbeis coma estatuas, ficaban na *piazza*. Marietta foi recoller o estoxo co seu instrumento. El botoulle unha ollada á lagoa. Podía ver a torre sineira que rubiran. A guía dixo que se derrubara a comezos deste século. Non había alicerces. Lembrou a data: 14 de xullo de 1902, o ano do nacemento do seu pai. Á dereita, aínda había luces no Pazo dos Dogos. De acordo coa guía, o pazo fora destruído ou parcialmente destruído polas lapas sete veces. Nunca houbera paz naquel predio. Poder de máis e moi poucas raiceiras. Un día deron en rouvalo e saquealo e despois diso empregábanos como galiñeiro.

Marietta entregoulle o estoxo co seu instrumento.

Toca para min. Tócame algo.

Pousou o estoxo no peirao. Tirou do peto unha harmónica e, virándose cara o Pazo dos Dogos, emprincipiou a tocar. A música faláballe.

Antes de que veña o mencer...

Ela fitaba as súas costas, relaxadas e abarcúladas coma as costas dun home a mexar, só que as súas mans estaban na boca.

...antes de que chegue o mencer... cando xa te vestiches e fuches ao apendre...

Apalpáballe a caluga cos seus dedos.

...os animais están alá deitados...

Ela premía coa man nas súas omóplatas e podía sentir os seus pulmóns e a súa música na bóveda da súa boca.

... deitados alí entre as follas das faias, e o teu cansanzo coma un cativo arrincado do seu sono...

A súa man palpou por baixo do cinto dos pantalóns.

... e a través da fiestra ves a luz das estrelas...

Ela reparou en que un dos cordóns das súas botas estaba solto. Anicouse para llo amalloar.

... a luz das estrelas cara a cuxo pozo somos guindados ao nacermos coma sal guindado na auga.

Neither of them noticed the vaporetto approaching the pierhead.

Come to Mestri, she sighed, come to Mestri. I'll find you work.

The bus left at 3 A.M. Most of the band wanted to sleep. Some husbands put their heads on their wife's shoulders, in other cases the wife leaned her head against her man. The lights were switched out one by one as the coach took the road for Verona. The young drummer sitting beside Bruno tried one last joke.

Do you know what hell is?

Do you?

Hell is where bottles have two holes and women none.

[For Jacob]

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Ningún dos dous reparou en que o *vaporetto* se aproximaba ao peirao.

Ven para Mestri, suspirou ela, ven para Mestri. Heiche atopar un traballo.

O autocarro partiu ás tres da madrugada. Moitos dos da banda querían durmir. Algúns homes pousaron as súas cabezas nos ombreiros das súas mulleres, e noutros casos, eran as mulleres as que encostaban as súas cabezas aos seus homes. As luces foron desligadas dunha en unha mentres o autocarro embicaba a estrada de Verona. O xove tamborileiro sentado a carón de Bruno tentouno coa última brincadeira.

Sabes o que vén sendo o inferno?

E logo ti sábelo?

O inferno éche onde as botellas teñen dous buracos e as mulleres ningún.

[para Jacob]

John BERGER («Play Me Something»,
Once in Europa, Vintage international
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