

The background of the book cover is a dense, abstract pattern of red and blue foliage, possibly leaves and branches, creating a textured and vibrant backdrop for the text.

GRAND TOUR

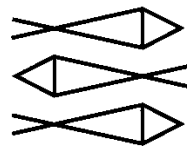
POEMS

ELISA
GONZALEZ

GRAND TOUR

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ELISA GONZALEZ



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FOR STEPHEN

After all, the good life still is only: life

—Carlos Drummond de Andrade, translated by Elizabeth Bishop

I

NOTES TOWARD AN ELEGY

The Cypriot sun is impatient, a woman undressed
who can't spare the time to dress, so light
like a vitrine holds even a storm.
One day in the Old City, a pineapple rain.
And I'm on my way home from the pharmacy, carrying
my little bag of cures.
Refuge at the café in the nameless square.
Nihal brings espresso poured over ice, turns off the music.
We listen to rain fall through the light until the end.

White wine greening in a glass.
Lion rampant in the sky. Moon reclined gorgeous in her silver shift.
Polished newels. Door askew in its frame.

Hot mornings. Hot apple tea, honeyed.
The mountains a fist knuckled on the horizon.
Dust is coming, dust is not yet here.

Whenever her hands dance, I tell her how beautiful.
She says there's so much other movement I do not perceive.
And I accept the presence of dances invisible to me.

Figs in the tree, figs on the stones.
Stains of rotting fruit spread and shadow at the sun's whim.
That steady dissolution of body into form that signals the progress
of a masterpiece.

Copper bowl in her hands. In the bowl in the hands, olive leaves burn.

I ask her to read to me. I like the way her voice handles words.
What will she read? First she laughs.
It's a good day to laugh. The coffee is strong. And the light.
Why read when we can talk? When all our friends are here?

My perversity is silence, a shudder stopped
in the throat. When all the time I hear her voice:
I am glad my soul met your soul.

—Examples of what, I do not know. It's just that
for a time I took Love out walking
with me everywhere and sometimes I thought, Child, whose
is this child?
when it played in the square. A sunshine creature, terrifying,
yet still I looked at it like I've never looked at a stranger
who promises water to the waterless for nothing.
And now I lie awake pretending everyone in the world
lies still the way the living are still:
not entirely, never entirely.