

BOLERO

¿Where do the unspoken words go?

by *Lupe Gehrenbeck*

IS THE START OF A NEW DAY. HE READS THE NEWSPAPER, SMOKES A CIGAR.
SHE FIXES BREAKFAST.

HE:

If it wasn't in the newspaper, I would think it is an invention. Things are getting so far that they are hard to believe. Nowadays, one can only believe in literature... it's a matter of principle of probability, as Aristotle said... because to read is an act of faith.

ELLA :

I got out of bed without making a noise. I walked down the stairs without turning the lights on. I arrived to the kitchen... I opened the fridge so I could see, the knives were all in the drawer... I slide my fingers over them... over their handles... I thought about him, in all the harm he's done to us. I knew at that very moment that I would dedicate my life to fiction.

HE:

The Department of Defense has identified 4,469 American service members who have died since the start of the Iraq war and 1,783 who have died as a part of the Afghan war and related operations... 6,252 dead... it is easy to be said, in any newspaper, spilled blood, ink on paper...

ELLA :

All it is because I know what I know... what I would never want to know... because he didn't want to marry me... if you make me happy, I know what to do: I don't tell you because I don't want you to know.... I prefer to see you suffer. Although it hurts, it hurts less than fear.

HE:

Bahrain handed out life sentences to 14 men for killing a Pakistani citizen during pro-democracy protests led by the Shiites this year, the state news agency BNA said. A military court also sentenced 15 others to 15 years in prison each for the attempted murder of a soldier, vandalizing buildings at the University and "inciting hatred of the ruling system," the agency said.

CONDESCENDENT, ASUMING SHE DOES NOT UNDERSTAND, HE EXPLAINS.

HE:

Bahrain is a small desert island kingdom in the Persian Gulf... an oil-producing nation of about 1 million that serves as a banking hub and as the base for the United States Navy's Fifth Fleet. A Shiite majority numbering as much as 70 percent of the population seeks more rights from a Sunni monarchy that conquered the island in the 18th century... holding regular protests, since late 2009...

ELLA :

I don't like it when you tell me what you're not thinking just to make me think ... neither do I like the way your head smells... I wish I could've had another father... another mother... another husband... a daughter, maybe? ... another idea of things, perhaps. Come, come closer... maybe I could tell you what you want to hear... come, don't be afraid...

HE:

Intense cold in the atmosphere... up in the Arctic, in last winter, the ozone was depleted... first significant ozone hole ever recorded over the high northern regions, thanks to chemicals, scientists reported in the journal Nature.

This is a striking example of how sudden anomalies can occur as a result of human activity that occurred years ago... all these emissions of CFCs, chlorinated fluorocarbons, in aerosol sprays, soil fumigant methyl bromide...

ELLA :

A word that is drawn out, can't reach, it's not enough... It's like a life lived like spilled milk.

Like minutes that never return, like future that doesn't matter... what do you say? If you don't speak, air fills you up with gases, making you sick to your stomach... So to speak, it's better to get intoxicated by anything else... by saying... no matter what... Whose are the words that are never spoken? The moon.

PAUSE. SILENCE.

ELLA :

Sometimes it happens, although not always, that it's the moon that watches. It watches through the windows at night, when nobody else is watching, when everything sleeps... even insomnia.

PAUSE.

ELLA:

Sometimes, even after the sun has risen, it still watches you. When you go to work, or when you step out for coffee and you take your time breathing in the fresh air, and you sigh because you don't know where he is, then, the moon doesn't smile, it hides behind the tallest trees, concealed behind the day's clouds... but it knows when was the last time you danced.

SHE TURNS ON THE RADIO.

ELLA:

Are you listening?

Songs are only sung when they're true.

Everybody repeats them even though nobody understands them. They calm fears... sighs.

Are you listening?

There are fast and cheerful songs. There are *adagios ma non troppo*. But the truth is that all songs are sad. That's why they calm you down.

Because songs say we're not alone. That's why you can't avoid them. Not even if they make you cry. Sad songs that are true.

HE:

Could you please turn down the radio a little bit?

ELLA:

To be left without a motive is worse than death, because it's prior to. Time becomes a hindrance that separates one from the end which neither is the motive... when the phone doesn't ring, neither you call, and the words you kept to yourself because they found no exit, the unspoken words, fatten you. Even if you diet, silence fattens, silence or carbs or pies, it's all the same...

Words fight, you get a cold or you lose your voice, fever, words look for their space, they widen shoulder blades, they overflow from your cleavage, words that don't find their place, filled you by what was never spoken and no longer matters. What was the point?

HE:

700 imprisoned from the manifestation in the of Brooklyn Bridge, don't you think is too much? 700 Homo Sapiens who dared exert their right to express their desire to live in a better world... 700 it's far too many... only think that at some point we were only a little bit more than 700! 60,000 years ago, of 80,000 that populated the world, only survive 2,000, when it seemed that the world was about to reach an end... we almost disappear...

ELLA:

700... 700... 2,000... 60,000... 80,000...! It's not hard to suspect that it won't be the best of days when you wake up and you don't look farther than to be entertained by the drawing made by a bumblebee as it flies over your bed, very close to the ceiling, lost from the window, and since there's no wind, there are no signs, the bumblebee doesn't circle around, it has no curves in its repertoire, the critter makes very straight angles, so straight they're closed, becoming lines, lines that retrace its steps, a lot of 45 degree angles, never taking a break, everything happens in the span of a few feet, for a foot, the life of the bumblebee... amazing its mathematics. Could it be out of desperation? What is it that animates its trajectory? What makes the bumblebee travel? Would I have been able to discover the existence of these enigmas if this had been one of my better days?

HE:

When you have a BMI (EXPLAINING)-body mass index-, of 30 or greater, (CONDESCENDENT) -this is the equivalent to being 5 foot 9, and weighing more than 205 pounds-; then, you are considered obese. According to TFAH, (EXPLAINING)-Trust for America's Health-, in Mississippi, nearly a triad of the adult population is clinically obese, making it the heaviest state of America. West Virginia and Louisiana are close behind. The paradox, the poorest the states, the most obese...

ELLA:

The body can separate itself from the person... and go on as if nothing has changed...

A person can go in life without a body... as if nothing has changed, as well. (SECRET) But sooner or later that must be paid back. The body pays for it and the person pays for it too.

It's not in vain, although it seems that nothing's happened, it doesn't go unpunished. Because the joys carried by the body only matters to the person, and a person's desire, can only be satisfied by the body.

For this reason, it's better to be attached to one's body, to better locate the sorrows.

HE:

Clearly, we are experiencing an epidemic that ultimately has its source in our culture. We are dying in the intent of better living... The industrialisation of food producción and the reduction in human movility -a reltively recent phenomena-, are the source of our mortal diseases. (PAUSE)... Reduction of human movility... we definitively have to move on... we have to stop living without moving... the irony: to stop is to strat moving... our bodies!

ELLA:

Emotions are muscles: they warm up, they cool down, they're trained, they grow tired. When those who've spent less time in the game don't understand, those who do know have less time to explain... it's one of the advantages of getting old.

HE:

We need to move, to get out of the cars! We got to be faster, yes, we are going further, yes, but not at free will, we follow the flow, we are slaves, we move with no reason, nor our bodies, just to follow the current, we are cars in a highway, following the trend, the fashion...

ELLA:

If you could buy yourself all the shoes you want, would you be happy?
 If you could drive around in a convertible, looking beautiful, glowing from the sweetness of the French Riviera, would you be happier?
 If everybody wanted to talk to you... or better yet, if everybody wanted to listen to you... would you then be extremely happy?
 If you had the shine you always wanted in your skin, your hair, in the bank... if you were in the most beautiful place in the world, with the perfect temperature, the beat of life's music impregnating everything... you wouldn't be happy without the committed look of your loved, that's where you exist, you fool!

HE:

There has been three ways of mortality as we move from Paleolithic times... to the present...

ELLA:

So, what fills life then? Kisses?

It's not enough.

Work?

No... definitely not.

With friends, lovers, trips?

...commitments... luxuries... children?

Are children what fill one's life?

Maybe applause, beauty, or health...

Good weather helps... no doubt.

Parties... phone calls...

Don't believe it. Don't believe any of that. Don't daydream. Earthquakes always happen in the dark... when everything rests, in the unknown landscape which conceals the truth of the emptiness of life, that nobody cares to see.

HE:

The present is the Neolithic... Present is only from 10,000 years ago, when we started to live together, when we invented cities. In the Paleolithic we hunted, we recolected what we ate... and we died from trauma in the fighting for survive... that was the way of 2,5 millions years of history... In the Neolithic, we died from infectious diseases, such as tuberculosis, smallpox, influenza, mézales, bubonic plague...

THE PHONE RINGS.

ELLA: (IN THE PHONE)

Hello... yes, a chocolate cake with whipped cream, please... and caramelized strawberries on the top? Yes! ...It could be pistachio, yes... mango ice cream... yes! The very same address... thank you very much...

HE:

As we control infectious diseases, we were already prepared with a new way to die: diabetes, hipertensión and cancer... cronical diseases from within us, we are finally liberated from the attack of any alien... we got infected from our own inner anguish...

ELLA: (EATING DESPERATELY THE CAKE)

The delivery boy must arrive before I finish this cake. I don't like to finish with a void future. I don't like the uncertainty...

HE:

It is not a guess. They are facts!

ELLA:

The whole point is to picture yourself in a movie and assign yourself the leading role. If you don't dislike the movie but you have a secondary part, it won't work, get out of the movie!

It's not a matter of living like a piece of wallpaper making someone else's scene possible, get out of the movie!

It's also not a matter of budget, it can even be a short film, but you always have to have the leading role! The lights put in place just for you, the best lines in the script, the best makeup artist always at hand attentive to the smallest sign of sweat.

If it's your own movie, it's the least you could do!

You can always make another short film, to continue living... in another city maybe, with other actors... you may change the leading man if necessary; you may change the hairstyle, the arguments... But you always have to make sure that you're the main character in the movie. It's the only cure for cancer.

HE:

The history reconstructed through the genetics, through the trace of gens in bones after so many years, recorded our way to move, to eat, to sleep, to die... (SHY) to sex...?

ELLA:

They're arguing in another language. They scream so loud you can't hear anything. He says, she responds, she says, he responds. Neither one of them gets off the train, they're going to the same place, a place familiar to both of them. The doors of the train open and close, they try to control around, they look like they've wasted away their afternoon, their lives... I don't believe you. I don't either. I don't care. Me either... Never again! You'll see. You're lying. I don't understand. Ask for forgiveness. I don't

understand. It's another language. You're someone else... without a period... without any commas.

HE:

We know now that malaria is caused by Protozoa of the Genus Plasmodium. And we also know that malaria multiplies with the living together, with the invention of the cities...

ELLA:

What is it that makes some people interested in some and others not... and vice versa?

Maybe what matters is the balance... maybe...

Why is that what interests me doesn't interest others?

If we were all interested in the same thing, tickets would always be sold out.

If there weren't people interested in wars, would that be the end of love stories?

It's the dialectic of opposites.

There are giants green and good as there are hoarse and bad ones, there will always be semi naked women wearing heels, like the buildings of Manhattan, the bicycles that pass without making any noise, and the Christmas dinner that's always attempted for being together.

HE:

Well, in the bacterium of malaria is recorded the human history. It is as simple as that. As complicated as that the history is recorded in the mosquitoes which transmitted it. From the moment the bacterium became important because started to kill us, we had to evolve to fight it as it evolved to fight us back, while living and well developing in the dirty water reservoirs of our civilization, in our cities, our kingdoms... the kingdom of malaria... the more people, more city, more static water... the more malaria, infection and death...

ELLA:

It's a good thing that books exist on this earth. Because then we can find out what we already suspected and discover that what others feel is very similar. We can experience distant hills, houses with curtains, furniture that never existed, bursts of laughter that were never heard, feelings and looks that only live in books... because they're similar. And when reality becomes small, one can always leave and go very far, from page to page, detach oneself from the horror and the pain... books are the territory where one finds the similar ones, by choice, because you're the one who decides when to open and close, believe or sleep, think or forget.

HE:

In 1980, in Shanghai, there were only 121 buildings over eight storeys. In 2005, 25 years after, there are 10,045 buildings over eight storeys ...more people, more city, more epidemics...

ELLA: (READING FROM A BOOK)

THE COWS:

We eat their meat and then we're capable of looking at them straight in the eyes. We drink their calf's milk as if it was Coca Cola and we teach our children to eat cheese and take digestives when necessary. And cows just

stay there, swatting away flies, chewing grass, well planted on its four legs, always with the glassy look of the inevitable.

HE:

In 1900, only 10% of us lived in cities. In 2007, 50% is living in cities... In 2050, 75% will be living in cities... if the development of epidemics is proportional to the concentration of people in the cities, we were fucked if we didn't have antibiotics...

ELLA:

THE WEATHER:

Who the fuck cares about good weather?

The winter is not a matter of meteorology but a state of the spirit. When you're in love you do literature with snow. Silent, you die from the cold... your soul freezes in the best day under a summer sky sitting by the pool.

HE:

The conclusion is we can live together because we control epidemics with antibiotics... but the chronic diseases that come with stress, traffic and pollution, cars, unemployment, sprays and ozone holes, chemicals, ketchup and solitude...?

ELLA:

SUNRISE:

Sadness dissolves with the sunrise. That's often the case with rage, as well. Although it doesn't disappear completely, a certain flavor stays and insists, certain bitterness at the tip of your tongue or at the beginning of a phrase when you're supposed to be calm but your darkness is seen clearly in the light of the sun.

HE:

In Shanghai, there were a million cars. Now, 5 years later, there are 25 millions of cars! In those very same Shanghai streets! ...612% more traffic accidents...

ELLA:

NOISE:

It's not like light... although it gets through all the nooks and crannies.

HE:

In 2020, more than 1 of each 3 Chinese will have diabetes; $\frac{3}{4}$ of the population in Minnesota die from it, 2 times more than in 1990... Diabetes is not contagious... Diabetes is modern, clean and quiet... Diabetes is in what we eat, it is our diet, our preference...

ELLA:

EAT:

To eat is to live... to eat is to die...

LOVE:

No matter the condition or duration... it's physical or nuances... love... always leaves scars.

THE COUNTRYSIDE:

No matter if it's spring or summer... if it's far or if it's your own... it is always a gathering.

VACATION:

When vacations end life starts... Then what's lived on vacation?

RESIGNATION:

The only thing needed to live without asking many questions is resignation.

HE:

And after diabetes... what is next? Give me a guess...

ELLA:

It's a lot harder to respect a cheerful person over a bitter one, a talker over a quiet one. But, whose is the silence of those who never speak. It belongs to those who don't listen, deaf and guilty, who have their own silence. In silence, rather than mystery there's power. In the same way, there are many unimaginable things that can be hidden behind a smile, antipathy, is common and even the desire to kill. But everybody prefers to live in the harmony given by smiles although nobody believes in anything. After the invention of toothpaste and television commercials it's become harder to believe in smiles. While in the silent sincerity of your empty bedroom, the world can easily be filled with desire to cry. Anything is capable of making you leave your room: an unexpected visit... an invitation to take a walk... a chocolate bar... or thirst. Good weather, the laughter heard outside, fear of being forgotten, or of being told the same thing... the illusion that the unknown contains the happiness that you've never known.

HE:

Madness!... this is what is next: before death, madness!

PAUSE.

HE:

According to the WHO, mental illness will be the second cause of death and disability by 2020. Over 400 million people around the world are afflicted by illnesses ranking from epilepsy to esquizofrenia and depression. Suicides are climbing. Over 1 million take their own lives every year... more than are murdered or killed in wars... The richest nations, which are also the most technologically advanced, are which lead this way of depression and anxiety... America and Japan don't have rival in the rest of the First World... first world... Where is the last world then? ... Who deserve to be the last in the world...? Last is less?... Did you know that 65% of newyorkers belong to an ethnic minority?

ELLA:

There are people who live simply, why complicate life? If you can't decide, if you're born with it, if it's call destiny.... and there are those who dare guess what will become of a child's life when they grow up as if it were only a matter of wishing.... As if wishing for something has anything to do with destiny... if that were the case, the child who wished to be a violinist and ultimately became a butcher, was lying...?

HE:

Shall we change the future... change the world... buy local, ride bicycles, live in the city that walks, embrace diversity...? Shall we dance?

SHE GOES FOR THE RADIO, HAPPY. THEY DANCE A BOLERO.

HE:

Clearly, size isn't everything. It's how you use it that counts. Look at this: nevertheless the Neanderthals were indeed more sophisticated than their ancestros with smaller brains, they disappeared. Do you know why? And

do you know why it was us, the Homo Sapiens, who finally survived? Neanderthals had their FOXP2 sequence and hyoid bones hint at a capacity of language, so they could talk... but it seems likely that they didn't have much to say! Neanderthals were probably pretty boring. And the reason we know this is that they didn't have Art! It is not only being able to communicate: it is being able to create, what makes the difference. Creation is a complex process that at its most basic it involves imagining new ways of solving a problem and then implementing them. So, it was not our biology but our culture, which had to evolve to finally make us who we are. That is how the Homo Sapiens who inhabit in Africa, surpassed the Neanderthals from Europe, 70,000 years ago: starting to do Art! That is why the Homo Sapiens ended to be the specie who survive until nowadays. We are all homo sapiens... Think about it. We are not the only beings capable of communicating... although most communications occurs in ways that don't involve speech, every creature from corals capable of distinguishing between "me" and "you", dogs, birds, whales, frogs...

ELLA:

I know, once upon a time there was a centipede that was amazingly good at dancing with all hundred legs. All the creatures gathered to watch every time the music of the forest sounded and the centipede danced, and they were all so duly impressed by the exquisite dance. But there was one creature that didn't like watching the centipede dance...that was a tortoise. "How can I get the centipede to stop dancing?" Thought the tortoise. He couldn't just say he didn't like the dance. What would be people think of him. Neither could he say he danced better himself, nobody would believe him. So he devised a fiendish plan: he sat down and wrote a letter:

"O incomparable Centipede,

I am a devoted admirer of your exquisite dancing. I would love to know how you go about it when you dance. Is it that you lift your left leg number 28 and then your right leg number 39? Or do you begin by lifting your right leg number 17 before you lift your left leg number 44?

I await your answer in breathless anticipation.

Yours truly,

Tortoise"

When the centipede read the letter, she immediately began to think about what she actually did when she danced... about each step... which leg did she lift first? ...Which leg next? What do you think happened in the end?

HE:

The centipede never danced again...?

ELLA:

That's exactly what happened. The Heart has reasons that Reason ignores...

HE:

I love you... with more than reasons...

ELLA:

I love you too... with all my heart.

THE END.

Lupe Gehrenbeck

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