

Four Prose Poems* from *Outskirts of the World

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Translated from Spanish by Michelle Gil-Montero

Coney Island

How does a disciplinary sea compare to a didactic sea? Or a choppy sea to a verbalized sea? You never know. Meanwhile, this sea begins to seem remarkably like the sea. You only need to wait for the day and night of reality. The sea's strategy is its own concern. That's its noblest quality: being an architecture that lost its mind in mid-August. There's nothing else to see here. Just some children with conflicting wings whose presence alludes to the purest form of an absence.

A River Runs Through It

The river is a sunrise of flying fish. (This is a gift.) But there are days when the river delivers a tainted message, or no message at all: no language for the flowing road, no inky fish to quell the speed. (This is also a gift.) Was there something here, before something was here? Nobody answers. Sooner or later, all things converge, and the river takes them, leaping over rocks, to the wavery basement of eternity.

Monts Déserts: 7 Statements In Homage to the Horizon

Most striking is its invisible occupancy. The magnificent doors are shut, as if a temple. A sudden crush of clouds, naturally free and in silence. Here and there, inevitabilities surface as signs: there is no sadder violence than the word island. What resembles an inner world? What white bird that looks out for itself? Maybe someone will tell the biography of a journey. Time is told in syllables.

Botany of Death

Some say that, at *The Door of a Hundred Regrets*, things meet. The desert, Hell, the oasis, and the most decrepit, perplexed books. But that's exaggerated news. What heavenly or earthly object could it possibly apply to? What tender malevolencies? What scrappy little horse girl with her fabulous animal? Look within, say the guides: this is the only pain that counts.

