

# Two Poems by Eduardo Vázquez Martín

## First Person of the Verb

I inherited a trunk full of anecdotes  
and the absence of God, among other things.  
Orphaned by faith, I find a wasted afternoon sky,  
and in my darkness I'm an alley-cat.

I like to flow like time in summer;  
drunk with cold beer, sliding  
from notion to notion till it gets dark.

Sometimes I don't wake up alone  
and I love the shapes of a disheveled bed  
and the names of women and Sundays.

I've got a few old books  
that chance passed from hand to hand to mine.  
Every day I think about the ocean,  
the one my parents crossed  
on boats that always burned on the far shore.

I have a few great friends.  
Notebooks to write in and empty suitcases.  
Time for shadows to come stalking,  
to sleep next to the complicit stones  
in dark paradises moribund by day.

By pronouncing their own names of rare birds  
those who have gone before come to mind;  
taste of the fruit ripped from the tree,  
dry brush kindled by nostalgia.



*Translated by John Oliver Simon*

## Foggy Road

Going in a car down a narrow road  
I roll down the window: the cloud  
encounters objects travelling with us.  
The fog looks like a god: present and intangible.  
I'm a kid on the back seat  
of a '70 Ford Maverick  
cruising along near Cumbres de Maltrata.<sup>1</sup>  
My dad is driving and Mama sings Spanish songs.  
What I can add to these few traces:  
the scarf I was sharing with my sister,  
the way you make a spark with two stones  
the tiny image of the child in the eye  
of the mother who's now, like the rest of these things,  
part of the fog that comes in when I roll down the window  
of the car going down the road.

*Translated by John Oliver Simon*



<sup>1</sup> Cumbres de Maltrata is the highest point on the Puebla-Veracruz highway; regardless of the time of year, temperatures are inevitably lower there and the mountains are wreathed in fog.