

Virgil Suárez



En el Jardín de los Espejos Quebrados

CALIBAN CATCHES A GLIMPSE OF HIS REFLECTION

To call a man a beast, one must see into his heart,
This much he knows is true in this garden of shadow
And light. When he cuts through it, leaving tracks

On the bone-white sands, he often stops to catch
His breath, rest from the days delivery of wood
To the old man's house. He thinks of the old man's

Daughter, her dove-sift hands, the way she'll smile
Up at her dresser mirror, as if she knows this secret
Of slatted images on a pond's surface. He haunches

Close to the ground, where the warmth from the day's
Heat coils about his naked, swollen feet. He feels
His scarred face, his empty promise of healing.

*Yo soy el hombre sin rumbo, el hombre en la tinieblas
De los días y las noches . . . aimless and uprooted,
The way a porpoise frolics on the crest of the waves,*

A manatee's weight sinks it into the wavering penumbra
Of a river's depth. Fourteen scars on his scalp, his fingers
Know the story, each welt, the piece of his right ear

Missing, sliver of cartilage, a nose broken too often.
How could he be the man in love with such a woman?
"¿Por qué no?" he calls out. In this island of all things

broken, shifted, he isn't the only one damaged by history,
by the way storms surge and ravage, uprooted Royal
Palms everywhere, roof shingles like buried hands,

So red, so blue, to call this man a beast you must bow.

