

# *Events with Life's Leftovers*

by Alberto Villarreal Díaz

Translation by Andy Bragen

Andy Bragen  
410 East 6th Street – 19E  
New York, NY 10009  
(212) 420-8099  
[andy@andybragen.com](mailto:andy@andybragen.com)  
[www.andybragen.com](http://www.andybragen.com)

OR

Mark Orsini  
Bret Adams Ltd.  
448 West 44th Street  
New York - NY 10036  
[morsini@bretadamsltd.com](mailto:morsini@bretadamsltd.com)  
ph: 212-765 5630

CHARACTERS:

401

404

403 / He

403 / She

405

305

408

Nontenant ( female or male)

In the Time and Anti-time of the Events.

Anyone wanting to make a catalogue of monsters would need only to photograph in words the things that night brings to somnolent souls who cannot sleep.

...ballasts of falsehood, their only function is to make us malfunction.

Bernardo Soares

And her moving height went before me,  
    We alone having being.

And all that day, another day:  
    Thin husks I had known as men,  
Dry casques of departed locusts  
    speaking a shell of speech...

Ezra Pound

**I**

**The Veneer**

**401**

Millions of years ago.  
When no life existed on dry land.  
A stupid fish.  
Decided to leave the water.  
No one knows why it thought air was breathable.  
Why that lack of circulation in the survival instinct.  
We know now that it made a mistake.  
Just a stupid fish with a clumsy idea  
Like so many we have every day.  
Believing that a bad idea was good.  
Like so often in our day.  
And no one has done anything to put a stop to it.  
A fish believing that air was breathable originated life on land.  
No one has done anything to fix it.  
All our problems begin with that first suffocating flop of the fish onto sand.  
With that lapse of the survival instinct.

**404**

We all agreed that that was the fundamental problem.

**305**

We agreed and agreements make problems.

**408**

We were all together, that was the problem.

**404**

But we were all together because we had a problem.

**401**

Plagued by insomnia, a group of fourth floor neighbors gathered in my apartment.

**408**

It wasn't because of insomnia.  
We were afraid of gas leaks.  
It's an old building.

**405**

It wasn't because of insomnia.  
We were lonely people.  
Some of us still are.

**403/She**

It wasn't because of insomnia.

There was a small man with a telescope, who'd recite from memory the atmosphere's layers.

**404**

It wasn't because of insomnia.  
There were personal motives  
Unspeakably personal.

**401**

The guy who invented the wheel didn't do anything either.  
Nor did the inventor of the lightbulb  
Or the fishing rod.  
No one who invented anything has ever bothered to fix it.  
It being the fish problem, of course.

**305**

Yesterday, there was an afternoon.  
It turned out that later on there was a night.  
To get through it, we gathered in apartment 401.  
Beat down by the day, we drank too much, and someone mentioned a fish.  
One that thought that air was breathable.

**408**

We spoke of punishments, humiliations, and painful ways of cooking.  
Fried, on the griddle, on the skewer, in the electric chair.  
Of it or of its fossil remains.  
Because they must be somewhere.  
On land, everything leaves marks.  
Our shape embeds itself in stone.

**403 / She**

People were having fun.  
We were laughing.  
We were happy, as if our lives had purpose.

**305**

To the point that 405 had forgotten her own ugliness.  
Her crooked teeth.  
That one eye was almond shaped and the other round.  
A standoff between her father's and mother's genes.

**405**

To the point where I found 404 attractive.  
In the style of an unshaven silver screen savage.  
Wrapped in knots of rough hewn clothing.  
He and I both felt the flame.  
For the fish of course.

**401**

We had a gift-wrapped happiness.

Enough for a small group of sad people.  
A special circulation within the nerves of optimism.  
Until it was said.

**408**

With a voice split by a vowel off key at the core.

**404**

As if she had two left tongues.

**305**

Why don't we return to the water?  
We'll return to the water, and end it all with a smack or a plunge.  
We all know that it made a mistake.  
And no one has done anything to fix it.  
Life on land will not be possible.  
Air isn't breathable.

**405**

After that, apartment 401 changed temperature.  
As if they'd put an electric grill in the freezer.  
As if they'd put a living thing in our bed.

**401**

If among the listeners, there is a diver who has explored a shipwreck full of victims,  
he'll understand the magnitude of the silence that floated between us.

**403 / She**

It's no good to arrive at truths.  
And it's bad manners to do so around company

**408**

No one gave way to the loftiness of the circumstances.  
No one belched or declared false love.  
No one burst out with an inexplicable wail.  
No one ripped off clothes, or threatened to jump out the window.

**404**

We all agreed and we were all together - that was the problem.

**305**

That building is a backyard full of leftover things.  
That was the problem.

**401**

And the beer swirled in our stomachs.  
Dragging down our hopes  
Down to the bottom of our own digestive world.

## II

### Coagulation

#### 403 / He

My apologies for arriving late.  
I spotted a weeping willow in a shop.  
And I wept.  
That poor thing will never be able to detach itself from the land.  
I pitied it.  
A whole lot.  
So much so that if my pity were edible, I would've stuffed myself to the gills.  
As if I knew that I would never again see anything like it, I stuck around to watch it weep.  
I left when a smiling guy came over to me, no doubt to let me know its price.  
I didn't want to get here with my shirt torn from a fight.  
I am a criminal, a kind of brute.  
Criminal because I threw away love letters that I'd received from a handful of women.  
They thought they loved me, and so they gave them to me.  
I was scared that my wife would find them.  
I threw the letters away and confessed the crime to her.  
Since then, I have given her nothing.  
I am a brute stuffed with the regrets of lost leaves of paper, and my wife enjoys chewing on them over breakfast.  
I don't attend the insomniacs' gatherings.  
I sleep like a swollen-footed log.  
The blood spills downward as I sleep  
The force of gravity inspires baseness in the internal fluids.  
A doctor warned me that I had one of those diseases, which, on the same day it killed me, would kill my wife.  
Something about the mimesis of one towards the other.  
Mimesis, an animal that makes itself the same as its environment.  
It blends in, and that way no one can see it.  
Like the weeping willow.  
Weeping blends it in, and no one can see it.

#### 401

I should also apologize.  
I forgot to introduce myself.  
But with people, as with food, it's better first to take a taste, and then to know the name.  
I think of myself as a sad muscle that doesn't know which leg or arm to move first.  
My life has been marked by small but important events which no one has witnessed.  
For example, the day I moved here.  
The day that I stole a bottle of fish food just because I'd never stolen anything.  
Or when I cast myself down like a worn out scarf in summer to cry over my worries.  
That awareness that the parking meter that is your life is about to expire, and you're not even the most interesting woman on your own floor.  
Someone lacking the ability to devastate another's life with a glance.  
A scrap of raw material to pass by without turning around.

**408**

I wasn't able to live in a place where the earth shakes every month.  
That's why I moved here.  
I come from a country where the law prohibits living near places that are barren or hollow.  
Like a wax museum.  
Or like a dead sea.

**405**

I wasn't able nor am I able to live in a place where it's cold all year, and when it's not, snow falls.  
But I didn't know how to move either.  
Someone told me about an agency that provides an all-inclusive moving service.  
All you have to do is to leave them your new apartment key, and your new address.  
At night they fill your room with a sleeping gas.  
One that smells of flowers or pine trees.  
When you wake up, you're in your new apartment.  
They've transported you there, you and your furniture and your pets.  
They also give you a wake up call for your first revival in your new apartment.  
All in eight hours.  
Which is the necessary sleep-time for a body that is neither young nor old.  
But they only handle apartments.

**305**

I wasn't able to live in a place where I was stuck too often "with myself".  
"With myself" is a real person, absolutely unbearable.  
I put it like that, to give it all a name, to everything which has to do with other people, but which they leave behind in me.  
I can tell them about her, about her way of stuffing her spirit with a handful of popcorn.  
A gorging of the strong emotions.  
Like the exchange of loneliness with others.

**405**

I wouldn't be able to move to a place with less than a thousand inhabitants.  
I dread the repetition of faces.  
It grieves me to see a face repeated and to know from memory whether the person has a good or bad ass.  
That ruins the mystery.  
I also get terrified when I see a frozen image on the television.  
That is true unhappiness.

**401**

Today, some hours ago, there was a morning.  
It's good to make that clear.  
Because it doesn't always happen.  
And the awfulness came this morning.  
While we all swore not to drink like that again at a gathering of insomniacs.

**405**

Oh yes, sorry my dear, but I wasn't able to call you last night.

I went to bed late.  
A girl said something about a fish.  
One that had left the water, and a whole bunch of other stuff about frying it in the electric chair.  
I don't remember, I've got phlegm in my neurons  
And a stomach-churning desire to tell the truth.  
I'm sending you enough kisses.  
And I cut off the conversation before beginning to discuss whether the correct way to breathe is with the lungs, or with the diaphragm.  
We always end up discussing that.

**404**

We ugly people have no willpower.  
Just a wish for returned affection.  
That business of beauty on the inside only applies to underwear and to the pink lungs of people who neither smoke nor live in big cities.

**403 / She**

This morning I had a sense of grief big enough for twenty boxes of chocolates.  
And the kind of sadness where you don't get dressed for a year.  
Nude like that, no one could go out to buy chocolates.  
I'm no longer at an age where I can steal from minors.

**401**

If among the listeners, there is someone who has ridden alone in the last car of the last train of the night.  
That person will understand the anguish that we all felt this morning.

**408**

After they said the thing about the fish, and one of those small catastrophes that changes the world took place, someone spilled beer or wine on the carpet.  
The woman from 401 ran to lock herself in the bathroom and turned her portable radio all the way up.  
We all cleared out little by little.  
When our own bladders started ordering us around.

**403 / She.**

This morning I knew that I had to leave him  
I knew it when I saw that he was using a glass of water as an ashtray.  
That is a crime against water.  
Unforgivable.  
Water is for drinking, air for smoking.  
Even people who've never seen the sea know this.

**305**

I'm going to tell you something that I've never told anyone.  
I lie to the people of the fourth floor so that I can join their gatherings.  
I have no right to be there.  
I live on three.  
305.

And so I lie.  
It's easy to get fooled before daybreak.  
At that time of night, we all suffer from sunken self-esteem.  
We leave ourselves too open to loving others.  
To dipping the cookies of gratification in a bit of warm attention  
Especially those of us who smell of solitude.

**401**

I will tell you a truth that I would never tell anyone.  
Well, anyone other than you.  
To live in an apartment is to be more in tune with nature.  
We are things of the air.  
That is something about which we all agree.  
And it's those sorts of truths which mustn't be mentioned around company.

**305**

Living on the third floor is a disgrace.  
There are neither gatherings of insomniacs, nor preparedness drills for catastrophes.  
Everyone has dogs, a bedridden relative, plants or jigsaw puzzles.  
They live wearily until snoring awake.  
On six, they have weekly gatherings.  
Issues of humidity, gas, and wall cracks.  
On seven they hold fire drills.  
On Sunday mornings.  
It looks fun.  
I hear them running.  
They simulate screams when they run down the stairs past my floor.  
I hear the panting as they return and pass my floor.  
You can hear so much in shortened breath.  
It's the most erotic moment of my day.

**408**

I live on the fourth floor.  
Apartment 408.  
But I'm not from here.  
All my life, I've been living on five.  
I've spent just a week on four.  
I'm not part of this uncivilized floor.  
They have strange customs.  
We say that if this building were a sandwich, we would be the french fries in between.  
Of course, this is assuming a sandwich made like I make them.  
But the world is not how I make it.

**305**

They've been holding drills because the elevator only works from the seventh floor up.  
A true necessity.  
It's said that on nine they have gatherings where they eat people.  
I don't believe it.  
That's commonly said about people you don't know, that they eat people.  
And who knows what they say about the people who live above them.

The people above are always dangerous.  
In the building, on the map, in the bed.  
The third floor is a disgrace.  
The spectre of another floor that died a long time ago.  
It's the rotting corpse of the tenth floor that burnt up twenty years ago.

**405**

About the guy that I called this morning, I can explain.  
The one to whom I sent enough kisses.  
I love that expression.  
They always say "enough for what?".  
You respond: for whatever you want.  
I love behaving like a box of gift-wrapped sweets.  
Very well: my history with him:  
I arrived, and I had to tell him that.  
He thought that I would say the rest.  
I said something that I no longer remember.  
And he said something he shouldn't have said.  
That's all.  
In that easy way, we lose each other.  
Like that like always.  
An 110 volt relationship.  
Alternating current for home appliances.  
Without high tension.

**403 / He**

You mustn't be too harsh with someone whose only fault is telling lies.  
More so if she's bad at telling them.  
Last night when my wife got home, she told me some lies about a fish.  
She always talks about the guy in 404's telescopes, or about the shapes of the neighbors' mattresses.  
But yesterday she talked about a fish, and her mother's recipes for cooking fish, and about how it's bad manners to talk while eating fish.  
She smelled of wine and reproached me for burying a fish spine in her heart.  
She went to our bedroom.  
She threatened to find a Chinese restaurant which sold puffer fish.  
I'd swallow puffer fish until I hit poisonous meat and died.  
I continued drinking water.  
Once she quieted down I went to the bedroom.  
She was snoring face down, with a posture which from my youth had propelled me to cover her with kisses.  
I shoved her to free up my scrap of the bed.  
I forgot to go to the bathroom.  
I took advantage of the opportunity and pulled the covers over me.

**405**

As soon as I hung up the telephone, I realized that it was a good day for a thaw.  
I opened the refrigerator door and let it happen.  
The frost had trapped a scrap of something that I'd forgotten there who knows how many distractions earlier.

I could eat it for dinner.  
Defrosting takes time.  
I propped open the refrigerator door with the garbage can.  
I placed a bench in front of my favorite home appliance and I took a seat to watch  
winter come crashing down.

**404**

I didn't go to bed at all last night....

**405**

Oh now I remember.  
I put an anniversary present in the freezer.  
The guy from the phone call, he of enough kisses, gave it to me when we'd reached  
seven years together.  
I wanted to freeze it for three years.  
To defrost it for our first decade together.  
Three flowers.  
A furry stuffed fish.  
And a box of sweets.

**404**

I didn't go to bed at all last night...  
After the thing ended badly with that fish business.  
And someone spilled beer or wine on the carpet in apartment 401.  
And the old woman from 403 told me that that night she was capable of loving me like  
a rock clinging to a sheer cliff, and made obscene references to my lunar telescope.  
And then she asked me about the kind of mattress I slept on, and her bladder forced her  
to return home to build a branch office of the world's lamentations.  
I left.  
I went to the Atlantis dance hall.  
Oh my god, when the Angel of Destruction descends to obliterate our species, may it at  
least spare the Atlantis.  
So I shouted outside the place.  
Drunk and as much a part of the place as the scuff marks on the dance floor.  
-We're closing up.  
-I don't care. I'm here to pick someone up.  
-You can't come in.  
And I started crying as if I'd just learned how from the old woman in 403.  
-Fine, come in, it's not the end of the world man  
They say that the Atlantis was a planetarium.  
With constellations projected onto its dome.  
Others claim that it was seafood restaurant called The Stateroom.  
With fish painted on the ceiling.  
Shipwrecks and sea nymphs.  
Above or below water – it makes no difference to me.  
I go to the Atlantis to believe that it's possible to find a dancing partner.  
Someone lacking rhythm, compromised by two left feet.

**403 / She**

I'd simply suffered overexposure to him.

I burned.  
There are things that you don't forgive.  
And dropping ashes in water...

**403 / He**

This morning I woke up with pain, and a little bit of urine on the sheet.  
The urine was mine.  
The next to last time that happened I was five.  
The last was when I was thirteen, and I dreamt in black and white about a girl I loved.

**305**

I turned on the news this morning.  
I only wanted to know if it was going to rain today.  
A map of the world with suns and little clouds.  
Umbrellas and snowflakes.  
That's the world.  
A tolerable place if you decide correctly and on time to head out with an umbrella or  
with sunglasses.  
The latest news.  
Something serious.  
Change of channel.  
All of them, the same. Different voices, same images.  
Very serious.  
We're seeing the end of an era.  
The world will no longer be the same.  
Cancelled weather forecasts.  
Nothing good can come of that.

**401**

What else gives me a blue tone.  
A blue carpet and that's it.  
Changes of blue result from changes in depth.  
But water is always blue.  
A color is a color.  
Someone spilled beer or wine in my apartment and I have to change the carpet.  
Tomorrow, I'm throwing away the carpet.  
Tomorrow?  
Not tomorrow, it has to be done today.  
Tonight I'm hosting a gathering.  
One of insomniacs, helpless people in my charge.  
A pile of life's leftovers.  
It will be important.  
Extra cost.  
I come prepared.  
Things we want to arrive on time, relationships that come and go on time, come with an  
extra cost.  
Yes I know it well, having ended hundreds of relationships.  
Above all with my very own self.

**408**

This morning I pulled out photos from a trip that I took years ago.  
The Holy Land.  
Here's a photo that I like a lot.  
A lot.  
I'm in a red bathing suit in the Dead Sea.  
Floating in the salty water.  
Amazing, you don't sink.  
You know, I've already lost too much time.  
We have a limited amount of time to lose.  
And mine is already gone.  
Like all normal people.  
It's part of growing up.  
I had a partner.  
Let's leave it at that.  
We were together in the Holy Land.  
She took my photo floating in the Dead Sea, and my hand when she remembered.

**404**

In the Atlantis I met a woman.  
We evolved as dancing partners to the point of mimesis.  
She had weepy eyes.  
She gave sloppy wet kisses.  
She left me because each time we embraced my lust grew bolder.  
Only a little, nothing wounding.  
It became sponge-like, like a tiny little pillow.  
And I wanted to say to her.  
Do you want to sleep on my little pillow?  
These were humid times.

**403 / She.**

I'm going to tell you a humid dream that I remembered this morning.

**401.**

Who gave the order to have this building painted yellow?  
It's a horrible color.

**403 / She.**

It's important to me because...

**401**

It's the color of bile and vomit.  
Of beer or wine on the carpet.  
The stupid fish that left the water must have been yellow.  
Sand, yellow.  
Fire, yellow.  
Yellow is the color of land.  
Of drought.

**403 / She**

I never remember my dreams and for some reason...

**401**

Also taxis in certain parts of the world, and some dangerous animal species.

**403 / She**

Today I felt a strange movement in my diaphragm which gave me an irrepressible desire to tell you about it.

**401**

Non-fattening foods, in other words foods that are torturous to eat, are yellow, the yellow diet.

**403 / She**

Fucking hell. Can you shut your mouths? Why can't you shut up for a moment? Why are all of you speaking all the time, at the same time? I'm older, and my life is going to sink down to the bottom of the clearance barrel.

I have so little left to say...

**401**

Listen, problems are everyone's birthright and they start with the first flop of a fish...

**405**

Let her speak.

It embarrasses her to tell us things as they are.

It's very shameful...

But in the following scene, she'll be dead.

**401**

No doubt it was her idea to paint the building yellow.

### **III**

#### **Distillation**

**403 / He.**

Our bed was normal.

Fit for sleeping.

Flat.

Unadorned.

Nearly square.

**403 / She**

The bed of two of our fourth floor neighbors is not normal.

It sinks so much in the middle that they sleep stuck together.

The other three neighbors' beds aren't normal either.

They sink in the middle because they broke the mattress springs.

Ours, my husband's and mine, doesn't look like those, it's flat and unadorned.

**403 / He.**

Before sleeping she does relaxation therapy.  
Standing causes her pain.  
When she relaxes, she feels like she's sinking.  
Her softened body sinks into the mattress.

**403 / She.**

The mattress springs that broke in the neighbors' beds were driven into the wood,  
wound up like corkscrews.

**403 / He.**

When she relaxes, she feels sustained by the springs.  
She sleeps to forget the day.  
She doesn't toss or turn, or scratch herself much.  
When she does, she wakes up ashamed, resets her face, and eats breakfast.  
We go to bed at the same time, and one of us falls asleep before the other.

**403 / She.**

My husband assumes that when I sleep, I dream.

**403 / He.**

My wife goes to the insomniacs' gatherings so she can imagine her neighbors'  
mattresses.

**403 / She.**

When one long night runs into another, I need to get out of bed and go to the bathroom.  
It's so I can feel like I'm changing places.  
I stand in front of the mirror and make faces to relax.  
If I don't pull it off, I stay there, staring at myself.  
Like that, I alone make myself sleepy.

**403 / He.**

My wife moans in her sleep.  
Yesterday I woke her up.  
She was making fish noises and it scared me.  
Upon waking, she immediately forgets what's she's dreamt.  
She only exists while awake.  
But she dreams.  
All mammals dream.  
Simple things, the day's banalities disordered by dreams.  
A shopping cart surrounded by a labyrinth of flowers.  
A talking toilet, and she shitting dollhouses.  
She has no more themes whereupon to dream.  
I don't dare abandon her, when I think about it, what comes to me is the image of her  
asleep.  
She has no one, not even herself, while asleep, she is nothing.

**403 / She.**

I wanted to keep a dream journal, but all I wrote down was my fish's birthdays.

I have two fish in a round fish bowl.  
When the fish sleep, they float.  
They sleep without closing their eyes.  
I love them.  
I change the water in which they float every ten days.  
The water is dirty, full of fish dreams.

**403 / He**

Today I dreamed that I left my wife after telling her that I'd burned letters from a handful of women.  
I left her the easy way, while she was changing the water for her fish.  
In the dream, I take advantage of the fact that she's not looking at me, and I leave the apartment.

**403 / She.**

At night, I had a dream.  
It's no big surprise.  
We were talking about fish, and I dreamed of fish.  
The dream begins with me in front of my round fish bowl.

**403 / He.**

I close the apartment door, lock it from the outside, and slide in the security bar so that nothing can get out.

**403 / She.**

I'm on my way to change the water for my fish when I slip and fall into the fish bowl.  
The water cleans the dust out of hair abused by the mattress made of dry earth where I couldn't sleep.

**403 / He.**

Upon leaving, I see the world's infinite landscape.  
Valleys and mountains made from the blankets and pillows of my own bed.  
I walk on a bedspread woven from blue woollen yarn.  
- It must be the sea, I'm walking on water. I think.  
Suddenly, through one of the gaps in the woollen bedspread, I am sinking.

**403 / She.**

I try to scream, but bubbles come out of my mouth, and when they touch the water, they turn into little lunar telescopes that immediately swim towards the top.  
My fish come along and eat them.  
I am so small that the fish could devour me. I resign myself to serving as their nutrient, one rich in fat.  
And I close my eyes.

**403 / He.**

I fall from the blanket of sea wool down to another below.  
It's a white sheet.  
What was the sea, now lingers like a woven sky.  
The white sheet is a crust of hot snow  
I begin playing with it, each time that I lift it a bit, I make a hole in the sheet.

- She's going to be annoyed with me, she loved this square of white cloth. I think.

**403 / She.**

I open my eyes because my fish haven't eaten me.  
As I open them, I notice that they're looking at me.  
One of them says to me: breathe.  
I'm underwater, I can't breathe, I'm going to drown.

**403 / He.**

Running, I move away from the snow-sheet that I've broken.  
I run until a pink wall stops me.  
Gigantic and endless.  
I smell it.  
I recognize it.  
It's my wife's pyjamas.

**403 / She.**

- Breathe through your gills. My fish tells me.  
I try it.  
I can breathe.  
Not through my gills but through a black dress with long sleeves that float like the wings of fish.  
I breathe through my pores, and through those of the dress.  
Through every spot where I get goosebumps when kissed.

**403 / He.**

I take a closer look at the cloth, it's porous.  
I understand why she is cold at night  
I manage to pass through the cloth.  
I am inside my wife's pyjamas, up where they stick to her shoulders.

**403 / She**

My fish asks me to take off the dress.  
No one swims in a dress.  
I take it off.  
My fish takes off his fishhead shaped hat, his outfit of scales, his flipper shoes.  
Naked, he is a small transparent jellyfish in human form.  
The light passes through his body, delicately, softly, he draws close to me, and my body molds perfectly to his.  
I love this sensation, like when I'm tired, and I put on my pink pyjamas.

**403 / He.**

I scrape the cloth.  
I find scraps of my wife in it.  
A hair from which the dye is fading.  
An enormous sheet of skin.  
I detach it with care, it's fragile and transparent, it lets light through, I think about hiding it.  
Hanging it like a curtain in our bedroom when she's not there.

I roll it up and decide to get out of her pyjamas, but I see something else caught in the cloth.

It's a mole that has fallen off my wife.

**403 / She.**

My fish and I finish embracing and doing things that are only done well in dreams. I want to take him with me, to hang him like a curtain, and kiss him in the mornings when the sun shines through him.

- You want to kill me. Says my fish.

And before he escapes, I remove his fins, I place him inside my dress and I swim towards the surface.

**403 / He.**

My wife's mole is a round pillow.

I place it under my arm. I'm going to take it with me.

**403 / She.**

My fish has died under my dress and is rotting.

Pink mushrooms grow through his transparent skin.

Disgusted, I let him sink.

My skin wrinkles, and stains, it turns heavy and dead like a black blanket.

**403 / He.**

I'm looking for a way out of the pajamas, when I hear noise around the blankets.

It's my wife, she's come home from work, depressed as always, she'll want to put on her pink pyjamas.

**403 / She.**

On the surface, I once again breathe through my lungs.

Breathing hurts me, the air is heavier than the water, it claws at the pores of my skin, and the dress.

I've stopped being a fish, I'm drowning, I beat on the glass with the fins of my dress.

**403 / He.**

I rip the cloth with my nails, it's stronger than the snow.

My wife draws near, I hear her taking off her clothes, undressing.

I weep and curse.

**403 / She.**

The fish bowl cracks open.

It's a noisy blast of water.

**403 / He.**

My wife picks up her pyjamas.

She puts them on with me inside.

**403 / She**

I'm heavier than the water, the air and the glass.

I fall faster.

The glass shards are going to cut me into smaller and smaller little scraps.

They cut me so many times, that I'm no longer able to say that I am me.

**403 / He.**

The pyjamas squash me against my wife's skin.

**403 / She.**

I am dead.

**403 / He.**

I position my wife's pillow mole so that it protects my face.

I am dead.

**403 / Ella.**

Dead, and my husband is not going to wake me up.

**403 / Él.**

Dead.

I have never had anyone to wake me up.

#### **IV**

#### **PUTREFACTION**

**401**

Let us take a moment of silence.

One for the two of them of course.

Let it not be said that on this floor we treat married couples as anything but a single unit.

**403 / He**

My wife and I wouldn't mind being two.

**401.**

But the others would.

You may not know this, but the further one is from the ground, the faster time moves.

From the third floor up we can't afford to fritter away the time.

#### **Nontenant**

Doesn't it bother them that meanwhile I'm speaking?

I don't even live in this building.

I'm going to deliver this from the outer crust of my emotions.

I just spoke with a scientist of unpronouncably intelligent name.

He delivers monologues about major animals from human history

He has one about Laika, the dog who wagged her tail in space each time her capsule passed over Russia.

Another about the sufferings on a Spanish vessel of the rat who brought smallpox to the new world.