

New Poems by Alex Pitre



Slurry

The bones had been surrounded by years of
suppression, political amnesia,
and walls of loam that contained not much more
than clay. Now laid out in some large building
on the edge of some town, these amalgamated bones or the
unidentified relatives

of them know the name. The smell fills up to
the rafters and a summer breeze or none
at all passes through picking up new weight.

If each bone could be perfectly matched
with the density of air, D could just
place it in the current. Thoracic cage.
Mandible. Radius. This equated

metatarsal could remain or leave without genocides or policies
guiding the way home.

The smell wrapped around each hair follicle
follows D home into the tile shower.

Maja absorbs it. It stings as it goes,

carrying gravity, leaving impressions
on pillows. The air wilts as it passes:
the difficulty

of finding the definition of a word when its absence creates
the shape of its meaning.

Nettle

Iron legs reach, sinuous and long,
to the floor. Down to the floor. So down, below
a bed under the floor and above the room.
Upside, inside, 'round and 'round.
The smell of iron fills my nose, fermented nettle leaves.
I live in the smell of it all.

I'll take it. All
of you. I'll braid my fingers through your long
eyelashes. Shake your head and let your leaves
drift down, savoring every second below
the winter moon rising. So round.
We've stayed here in this room

with our roots deep in the soil. The sun to light our room,
the walls. If you would have ever asked about all
that I had wanted. The year turning around.
On the beams that hold up your knees I left you such long
messages. Can I write upside if I am below?
And then the sun, it leaves.

I still see your face between the leaves
casting shadows on the dirt brown wall of our room.
Upside, inside, you've tried to hide below.
So silly. Below is my hiding spot. All
the things I have hidden under my roots long
for that humus and detritus to surround

each layer of skin. 'round and 'round.
Lying with my chin upward, your leaves
tickle my cheeks. Lean long
iron legs burying into our room.
For all
of our seconds, I'll remain below.

You know what's down here, below

with me. We've turned around,
spiraling. Twisting all
our leaves and our leaves.
You left me all the room
again, but your arms they are so long.

Below, when I saw you there, I wondered how long
round pupils would last in this room.
All our seconds spent tumbled in leaves.