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## I Keep at Home Under Key

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## I KEEP AT HOME UNDER KEY

I keep at home under key two serpents  
of the dynasties  
closeted apart: *Prorsa* (so Stendahl called her)  
is longer and moves stealthily, *Versa*,  
the undulant one; the two of them  
fly like swans through the air of the night when I bid  
that they make their ballet;  
daytimes instead they sleep curled up  
in seven, almost always in seven, in  
their dwelling place of glass. They dream they're  
the goddesses Nekhbet and Bouto who danced once like they do  
in The Book of the Dead.

I use them to write the World, for this  
I give them milk and grapes, I let them play  
free among my papers; I like that they speak alone  
like I do, that they think  
their girlish thoughts from an immemorial  
splendor without fear of  
death: that is what I like.

And how they laugh at every mad line  
that comes to me. *Versa*  
trusts more in what I do, and even  
caresses my ear. *Prorsa* the exact one  
allows me less luxury—not that way,  
she says: without  
euphoria.

Sometimes I open to them the other door of my skull and that is  
joy: they dance  
into madness, they fly  
through my imagination as if entering  
another galaxy, and  
let no one sleep in that mirror. The shattering  
begins with the cockcrow.

## GUARDO EN CASA CON LLAVE

Guardo en casa con llave a las dos serpientes  
dinásticas en  
trinche aparte: *Prorsa* (así le puso Stendahl)  
es más larga y sigilosa, más  
ondulante *Versa*; las dos  
vuelan como cisnes cuando les pido  
que hagan su ballet en el aire por la noche; de  
día más bien duermen dobladas  
en siete, casi siempre en siete, en  
su morada de vidrio; sueñan que son  
las diosas Nekhbet y Buoto que ya bailaron antes como ellas  
en El Libro de los Muertos.

Las uso para escribir el Mundo, por eso  
les doy leche y uvas, las dejo jugar  
libres entre mis papeles; me gusta que hablen solas  
como yo, que piensen  
su pensamiento de muchachas desde un fulgor  
inmemorial sin miedo a  
morir: eso me gusta.

Además cómo ríen de cada línea loca  
que se me ocurre, *Versa*  
es la que más confía en lo que hago, y hasta  
acaricia mi oreja. *Prorsa* la exacta  
me exige menos lujo—así no,  
me dice: sin  
euforia.

A veces les abro la otra puerta de mi cráneo y ésa sí  
es alegría: bailan  
hasta enloquecer, vuelan  
por mi imaginación como si entraran a  
otra galaxia y  
no dejan dormir a nadie en ese espejo. La quebrazón  
empieza con los gallos.