

# *Psalm of the Aperture and Other Poems*

Eugene Gloria

## *Psalm of the Aperture*

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Today I decided to be naked  
so my wife handed me her floral apron  
for modesty. We strolled

to the business section where  
we found an eating spot  
overlooking the river.

Our waitress was ignoring our table.  
But my wife had grown fond of our spot  
and didn't want to leave.

The muteness of the river  
was intoxicating. And my wife's  
attention, radiant!

We sat there gazing at the river  
for nearly an hour.  
The camera on my lap like Emerson's

transparent eyeball. I love  
the pleasing noise it makes.  
A satisfied burp, a sated account

of the apparatus' secret joy:  
capturing the light on my wife's face  
at noon, or at dusk.

On our long walk home,  
my wife began telling me a story  
about a 67-year-old woman

giving birth to twins. I hear  
bird chatter, the river nearby.  
I lean this doughy

mass of me on her voice  
as if it were a body  
that has lived a long time.

## ***Psalm with Dog Named Raymundo***

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What has become of Raymundo and the herd under his watch? And what of the sky, a dirty white coat of Raymundo? Such was the world when I arrived. I was tired from the staggering hike and I had a book to crack open for the first time. Just when the pages were melting and my eyelids began to sag, I was startled by a commotion. The bleat of sheep, the faint, and hoarse bark of Raymundo. No, it couldn't have been Raymundo. It was the murmur of humans from a distance, which sounds almost like the strained voice of Raymundo. Exhaustion won over curiosity and down I went into the white peony petals of sleep. I recall now the dream I had of a Battle Royale with Pepper Gomez and Tik Tik Afoa and Ray Stevens assuming the villainous role with his beach-blond hair and blue trunks. The blue of his trunks like a gesture of conciliation, was meant to be friendly to the eyes. In my dream I floated like the lovers in a Marc Chagall painting, soaring over a ring of wrestlers body-slammng one another in the center and along the corners. My bird's eye view allowed a clear shot of men in their sturdy high-waist trunks, busy in their office cubicles, working two by two. Does the last man standing determine the winner? Then I woke and remembered Raymundo, the dog manqué in the middle of the fenced-in field. The sheep in the center and along the corners making their baah baah baahing cries and Raymundo ever watchful, eyeing me like the air marshals of Homeland Security. Then that morning, all the talk was about the breakout. The sheep had rushed the fence and escaped. They trampled the vegetable garden though eventually were rounded up by elite sheep-herding dogs deployed by the owner. I asked how Raymundo fared during the jailbreak and the reports were unfavorable. He just stood there helpless, according to eyewitnesses, while the sheep bolted and scattered. Heaven knows there is still room for working stiffs like Raymundo. Elysian fields like a peculiar horn of plenty with muddy clouds and an entire tribe of Raymundo heralding the new day like a tone-deaf priest trying to sing with the choir.

## **Bra**

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The balconette, the backless,  
the demi-cup, plunge, posture:  
a list of surrounding noise forming  
into a Jell-O of semantic memory.  
Racerback, sheer, soft cup,  
strapless, underwire, the core  
as in my cerebral cortex  
has an eye and hook fastener  
begging to unsnap. My ambulant  
cabbage has built-in stretch memory  
even though my heart, poor heart  
needs winding up at daybreak.  
My father is at his wick's end. His mind's  
a mess, a splatter of church rice.  
When he lost my mother, his brain  
went flabby from watching too much TV.  
To the heart of things human  
there is the plunge, the posture,  
sheer underwire of grace. There  
is the bra drying on a hanger. My father  
forgetting where my mother went.

## ***Geronimo***

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If the night wind could speak in sentences,  
it would say, "I got a face on you, G."  
Because the night wind knows the body  
always dies before its name. Because  
Geronimo is an itinerant velocity with in-laws  
stooped in labor camps, women marrying men  
with surnames like Jobim and Yonemoto.  
Brasileiro fishermen know that Geronimo  
is a call to arms, a leap, a rush to judgment.  
And wherewith Geronimo comes a day late  
and a dollar short if Geronimo comes at all.  
Geronimo snug around the belt and collar,  
riding shotgun in a pickup, trolling for  
day laborers at parking lots of Home Depot.