

ISOLITUDE

Pregnant? Me? Pregnant! How am I going to tell Hiro? I can't. My marriage, the compromise. And a son of Guil, Who is gay! He told me very clearly that he doesn't want to have children, not with me, not with anybody. And Hiro . . . He gave me all this money for the first payment of our new house, he trusts me. Pregnant . . . There must be a mistake. I can't believe it. "Maximum credibility test" . . . I need to talk to somebody. 090 8744 Akiko . . . does not answer. O90 4452 Guil . . . Pick it up! Here goes a message, then. Menu / C-mail / Guil / I'm pregnant / Send.

What's wrong with this woman? She didn't expect it, huh? Big surprise. Is she married? I wonder. It seems she doesn't want to relieve it. But it is true. How many cases do I see every day in this clinic. Nurse this, nurse that. Tears, nerves, and, of course, the mobile phone message. They are all the same. Eleven o'clock. One hour to go. I'm so hungry. Didn't eat breakfast 'cause I woke up so late. I don't know what's happening to me. I see television as if there was no other thing to do, yesterday until 3 AM. She is gone. Good, sometimes they ask for a second test and what a waste of time. Yu-ko-ma-sa-yo-shi . . . "Maximum credibility test" . . . positive . . . another file to type.

Where is it? Where is it? Oh, yes, here. In cash. Hiro must have saved for years. One, two, three, four . . . Yes, all here. But . . . I can't do this, not yet. I have to talk with him, with Hiro and with Guil. This man here in front of me is waiting, I know, I have to sign, but . . . With this money I could take a plane, go far away, start a new life or . . . Even better, I could go right now to an abortion clinic. I . . . Better come some other day, excuse me, oh, excuse me, excuse me, Get off my way! *This is the right man for you, the most convenient.* I can never tell my mother what is happening. *He has money, good position.* In

the first place, she doesn't understand that I am interested in something else, I'm not even sure I want to marry Hiro. *He graduated from one of the most prestigious universities.* Finally, a park, I wanna sit down. Guil doesn't reply my message. Guiiiil . . . the phone doesn't get through. Where are you? Akiko . . . no answer either. I want a love relationship, real love . . . It can't be here. It can't be with Hiro, I don't really know him, make up and nice dinner is not knowing someone. I will end up like my mother, with a husband she does not talk with, no opinions, no arguments. No. And, Do I want a son? No, I don't want one. Plus: half Japanese, half Brazilian, with no father... No. I'm going to that clinic. I remember one in Temmabashi. Akiko aborted there when we were in high-school.

What a weird woman. She seems so nervous. It must be because of all the cash money she is carrying in her bag. But who is gonna steal it? She is not at Roppongi nor is late at night. She is so scared. Noon at Osaka, nothing is gonna happen. Let's see, the document is . . . here. Yes, Hiro Yamazaki, your future husband, this is it. While you sign, I'll look for an envelope and . . . Huh? Where is she? Why didn't she sign? Did she go to the toilet? There she goes, almost running, back to the street. What a weird woman. Let's call the husband.

What have I done? What have I done? What am I gonna do now? *After all I have done for you.* My father is going to kill me. Everybody will think I took that money. Well, if I use it in the clinic . . . it would be like stealing. *No one will accept another omiai with you after this shame.* I have to go back. I could say I was feeling bad, that I was about to faint. That is why I left the office. But, What about my abortion? I don't have enough money. Akiko, Where are you? I could borrow from you . . . Aaaa! Pick up the phone! And what about Guil? Could he pay for it? No, too much for him. He only has his scholarship. Saved number one. Saved number two. Saved number three, four, five. Nobody picks up

the god damn phone. Bunch of idiots! Where are you, all of you? Sometimes I think nobody really exists, that I am alone between holograms, each of them clinging to their mobile phones. Ti ti ti ti. Thousands of phones yelling like cicadas. And who does really talk? Who does talk to me? To me, Huh? To me! Excuse me, yes, you, I need to talk to someone . . . I'm talking to you, Stupid! Look at me!

That *japanesenhia* yelling *como loca* seems *muito* like a friend of Guil I met once . . . But how could I know. They look all the same, with their *Burberry* and *Luis Vitton* uniforms . . . *No, no podría ser*. How *eshtranio* that somebody dares to talk alone here inside of the train, *aquí*, in this country *tudo ordenadito* . . . She must be really crazy. Better to turn to another side. Oh, this other girl reads a pretty book, with *fotos*. *Yo no entiendo nada*, I've never seen books in my language, *Español*. In *Portugues* yeah, my roomies', but I cannot read them, *ainda*. What is this girl reading? What is it about, I wonder. *Hi-ro-se-yu-ko*. She is almost crying. *Llora que llora*. And the other one is talking louder and louder, screaming and everything, One doesn't know where to turn around anymore. Hahaha. The *gritona* has directed her crazyness to another girl that looks so much like her, just like that, and calls her Stupid! This is fun. I could help her if she was that Guil's friend. . . Or if she was any other of my friend's friend. But, anyway, *ela* had to recognized me. A *wera* with blue eyes, impossible to forget me. A *wera* that doesn't speak English nor Spanish nor Portuguese, but a bit of everything. Guil . . . what a good *amigo* he is, I can call him anytime and he would listen to me . . . He makes me feel good, he says that he doesn't like *mulheres*, I don't believe him. *Vaya*, she shut up. There she goes, *sentadita*.

Japan island

island persons

island telephones

wagons

island island island

And what is that Cheq staring at? Cheq-russian-what-ever-she-is. She must be a whore, a model, a hostess, all fake all. Look at yourselves, look-at-our-selves, all blonde, red hair, black skin or “ultrawhite”, all fake all. Reefs without bind. Men and women, children and moms, keys that never touch the other, that will never really talk to the other.

An this, this I am carrying here, and island little embryo.

Someday I will have a son,

but not you.

If you were born

(nobody would marry me, I am sure)

you would be only son

like almost all

are

now

one

one

one

island number

we are

swampted islets

tied to a genesic harbor

broken, devastated...

If you don't rain into yourselves you'll die,

we are already

dying.

Forgive me island boy, forgive me.

I am tired.

Poor girl, Is she OK? All huddled up like that, on the floor, and here we do not sleep, we sleep over there, under the bridge, this *ne-chan* is clean, is one of the train persons, one that goes up and down the train, one that goes in and out of this station. Us, the ones that live here inside, we are all old, all old. *Ne-chan* looks sad, looks pale. She is throwing up, there, on the floor, her hands are filling up with vomit, she doesn't have a towel, of course, she is carrying those little bags that are not useful at all. Did she eat something that went bad? That happens to me sometimes; if we get an *obentō* more than two days old. Or maybe she drank too much alcohol, but so early in the morning? Nobody stops, they're gonna step on her.

Why is this old man coming near to me? He smells horrible. What do you want? I'm such a mess. I want to go to the toilet. Don't touch me, I can stand up by myself, I smell like shit, how disgusting. And nobody would come near to me now . . . Well, you cannot get to the wagon if you don't cross with me, because I'm . . . so . . . close . . . to the rails, to the end of the platform. It wouldn't be that bad to fall . . . and everyone would be sorry, they would say "Why didn't we help her?" And this old man that remains by my side, silent, he couldn't stop my body from falling, he doesn't have the strength, and he would miss all this money I'm carrying on. You know what? Take it, yes, take it, this envelope is for you. I rather go to the rails, to something else, to another world . . . if there is such a thing. . .

The train is coming.

My legs shudder, I can't control them.

The train is coming.

I can't see anything. . .

Poor girl, Is she OK? All huddled up like that, on the floor, and here we do not sleep, we sleep over there, under the bridge, this *ne-chan* is clean, is one of the train persons, one that goes up and down the train, one that goes in and out of this station. Us, the ones that live here inside, we are all old, all old. *Ne-chan* looks sad, looks pale. She is throwing up, there, on the floor, her hands are filling up with vomit, she doesn't have a towel, of course, she is carrying those little bags that are not useful at all. Did she eat something that went bad? That happens to me sometimes; if we get an *obentō* more than two days old. Or maybe she drank too much alcohol, but so early in the morning? Nobody stops, they're gonna step on her.

- *Ne-chan . . . Daiyobuka?*

Why is this old man coming near to me? He smells horrible. I don't need your help.

What do you want?

- Are you OK? Can I help you getting to the toilet? – The voice, the voice of someone, of a face without a screen nor keyboard nor flashing lights, a being with eyes that is looking at me.

I'm such a mess. – Where is the toilet? – and my voice, it's been such a long time since I heard my voice last.

- Over there. You go in, I'll call the train clerk.

- Thank you.

- The . . . The clerk man never pays attention to me.
- Don't worry. I just need to wash my hands, I'll be OK.
- It wasn't that hard.
- There are worse problems, aren't they?
- There are.
- Here, this bill is for you, is not that much, please accept it.

Now, which train would take me to Temmabashi?

*“así / diseminados pero juntos
cercanos pero ajenos / solos codo con codo
cada uno en su burbuja / insolidarios
envejecen mezquinos como islotes”*

- *Mario Benedetti*

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