

The Heartache and Thousand Natural Shocks · *Juan Gelman*

when hamlet took a flute and asked guildenstern to play
and guildenstern said I cannot and hamlet
then said wretch
you cannot draw one note from this simple instrument
and you would pluck one from me an endless man
 of blind successive beasts
that look out through my eyes
and millions of faces like constellations in my blood
adrift or falling like a shooting star against the darkness
sweet dying out in my abysses
and its holocaust rises to my spittle
a small acrid drop being sufficient to its splendor
and this rustling old as centuries like a yearning in my testicles
 invading the night
when I come into me as to a tumult of still nameless stars
and watch them flee collide collapse undone by their fury
and cry a tear
at their cracklings and disasters
think you not guildenstern believe you not
that hamlet elsinöre denmark
europe the globe the universe and galaxies that tremble beyond
are but the the tear of a prince dreaming himself in his own night?

*Translated by
Roberto Márquez*