



# JACLR

## *Journal of Artistic Creation & Literary Research*

*JACLR: Journal of Artistic Creation and Literary Research* is a bi-annual, peer-reviewed, full-text, and open-access Graduate Student Journal of the Universidad Complutense Madrid that publishes interdisciplinary research on literary studies, critical theory, applied linguistics and semiotics, and educational issues. The journal also publishes original contributions in artistic creation in order to promote these works.

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### Volume 2 Issue 1 (July 2014)

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"Healing & Naipí"

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#### Recommended Citation

Simas, Flavia. "Healing & Naipí." *JACLR: Journal of Artistic Creation and Literary Research* 2.1 (2014)  
<<https://www.ucm.es/siim/journal-of-artistic-creation-and-literary-research>>  
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#### Healing

Dishes will not run away, anyway.

So I grab a coat, get out in the cold, cold evening. It was your choice, your choice to be here, no use complaining. It's always silly when people grumble about the weather. It's Ireland, you copy that. There's no point in being weather-stricken, AL.

Truth be told, I am. To the bone. Gelid wind on my face, I get reminded of my prolonged summer. You don't just detach from 30 years of heat like this. That's almost eleven...eleven thousand days, you know. Wind, you could very well give me a break. This hat, it is supposed to remain on my head.

As if to remind me that weather reigns in here, hat flies away. I'm suddenly dancing in that empty road, angry at the gale, annoyed at how stupid my idea had been. Not a good time for strolling. Hat is on my hands now, I walk towards the end of the street. To be honest, this is just an alley, and its name, St Patrick's Avenue, sounds a lot like a joke to me.

So many empty houses. I wonder who's lived here before. Like, last century. And the century before the last. I start imagining the place during medieval times. This wind, it won't stop blustering. Makes me shiver. You silly little thing, imagined it would be easy, huh?

Hey. That's not my voice anymore. What did you just say? I said, silly little thing, you thought it was going to be easy in here, right? A strange noise breaks into the gust, as if to give me a last chance to run back in. Something seems to be moving in my direction and I'm pretty sure those strides are not human.

I'm not exactly terrified, as I can pretty much contend that I am a rational being, but I could swear I was alone in that place and suddenly a voice appears in the scene. Well, that trotting is also disturbing. Where are you?

Over here. I turn my head, and see a light. Won't you just run away? I'm giving you plenty of time. It's not like a faint, female voice is going to attack me anyway. Are you wailing or what? I'm in pain. You'll get scared if you see me this way. No, I won't. You tell me, where are you? Wait. Are you *neighing*? No. It's the wind, then. Uh...no. Look. Again. You *are* neighing!

Are you a mare? No, I'm no night-mare. I'm a night-mule. I bray, I suppose. What's with your head? I've no head. I'm glad you're not terrified. You knew I wouldn't be. You've been watching me, haven't you? You know I'm rational.

I know you're skeptical. You still can't believe this is happening, that's why you're not simply running away. Well, maybe. I like your voice, though. You sound harmless. Except for the fact that you are a mule with light for a head. Is that fire or what? Anyway. Except for the fact that you are supernatural and you are standing near an old church at the back of a darkened alley. Funny thing is, I live a few steps from here. Reason enough for me to break my lease, I guess. Been paying too much, you know.

I realize I'm being slightly impolite. Sorry. I'm really sorry. I have the tendency to get absorbed in my own thoughts. My own little unimportant existence. Don't say that, I actually think your life is pretty amusing. Do you? Like, really? Yes, I do. That's why I thought of asking you to help me. And how can I help ye? I like the way you just absorb people's accents. You're forever an outsider, but you do well on picking up mannerisms.

I laugh. Whoever this is, she knows how to deal with me. This is pretty awesome, I sort of whisper. I know! I so needed a friend. Me too! Thank goodness you're not judging me. Why should I? You are clearly upset. Now, tell me more about you. How did you end up in here?

She tells about herself, but not too much. I think the images are not very clear in her no-head, although I can ascertain that she's pretty rational and grounded, despite her immense lack of self-esteem to believe that. The person or entity who did that to her could not, after all, strip her from sanity.

Oh no, I'm a body, just a body now. That's what I am, she says. I don't try to dig much into what type of past she holds, as I figure it must be hard to assess certain memories. Oh girl, she seems to be dealing with some pretty intense recollections. They seem to hurt like arrows on her throat. It could feel very bad to have someone interrogating you. So I just sufficed to keep her company. Look Mule, you don't need to say anything. I'll keep you company for as long as you need.

We meet every night for a month. It's always the same thing: I wait until people are no longer out, and that's tricky, as drunk people love passing by this alley. But overall, it's just

me and the mule. We spend good, quality time together. Strangely, I stopped minding the poor weather. My dancing hat and sprinkled spectacles irritate me no more.

We talk amenities most of the time. We strive to be each other's best company. The most intense moments, however, are those we talk about dreams. She dreams of being in a huge pasture, where she runs free and plays with wild cavies. She helps them hide from the foxes. They are afraid of them, she says. I dream of heat and I'm like walking on the beach, feeling the warmth of the summer breeze on my face. It all feels so cozy, so delightful.

Would you like to be human again? Well, I sort of forgot what it is to be human, this is my comfort zone now. I just feel sad that I have no friends. I'm glad I have you. I've been cursed, yes, but I won't let that curse define who I am. And, who are you? I'm someone who's slowly learning to forgive herself. Girl, you're profound. It's funny how we are completely different and yet, here we are, sharing, caring, bleeding, belonging, together.

One day she comes to me and thanks me for all my help. I quickly respond that she is massively aiding me, that I too am egoistically looking forward to those meetings. You keep me warm, Mule. Your fire-head was providential, I guess. She neighs in contentment. Her voice is no longer eerie, not even sad. She is finally comfortable in her own skin. I blissfully thank her for choosing me.

Confirming the theory that all life yields are waves of impermanence, one fine day she goes away. She seems to be fully healed. How silly I was to believe that curse! Yet, that curse was a crucial thing that happened to me. I know I wouldn't have met you otherwise. I know! I'm sad you're about to leave, but I'm tremendously satisfied to hear you are ready to resume your awesome self, in whatever shape you choose.

A part of me will be always there with you, Mule. I'm glad we are not afraid anymore. What a magnificent month this has been. A curse got diluted in love and friendship. I will never forget you, AL. I'll go for a walk whenever I miss you. That space will always be there for us, reminding me and you that another world is not at all an impossibility.

## Naipí

I'm a woman from the global South.

Don't you know you can't really hurt me?

My soul, my precious,

It's already scarred.

Nothing really jolts me

I'm still able to acquiesce

From star

To starred.

I'm a woman from the global South.

Don't you know dismissal sets me free?

My soul, my darling,

It's already taken.

By the flowers, by the trees

I still occupy the universe

From sand

To sanded.

I'm a woman from the global South.

Don't you know I don't really need your tea?

My soul, my sugar,

It's already mellow

From the tears, from the sear

I'm yellow -- steel

From land

To landed.

I'm a woman from the global South

Don't you know how much I stare at the sea?

My soul, my honey,

It's already gone

With the quiver, with the leer

But I still -- transcend

From water

To watered.

I'm a woman from the South

You know ~zilch~ about me

My soul, my body

This body -- mine

With the wine -- the shine

And I still refine

From sow

To sown.

FreeR

**Bioprofile of the author:** Flavia Simas holds a Master's Degree in Linguistics from Federal University of Goiás, Brazil. She has lived in India, U.S and is currently trying her luck in Ireland. She is the co-founder of a Brazilian feminist collective (Ativismo de Sofá), a blogger (Afro Latina), a dreamer, a woman.

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