



JACLR

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"The Event"

3RD PRIZE "VIRGINIA WOOLF" FOR SHORT NARRATIVE

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The event

Here, nothing will happen here, no one will be here, for many a long day. Departures, stories, they are not for tomorrow. And the voices, wherever they come from, have no life in them.

'Life is all about trains', mother used to say. A life-long journey, made up of small trajectories, of shorter trains you'll have to catch, or which you'll miss.

'There will be people who will take the same train as you do, and your trajectories will be intertwined for a while; until one day—maybe—they will have to leave to take another train. Some other people will remain there, until the end of your journey. Among those who left, some you might see again, if your trajectories coincide once more. Others will be gone forever: your ways will be split, or they will leave their train to conclude their journey.

However hard, every journey must come to an end, even yours. One day it will be your turn to leave, as every life must reach its destination.'

I may have believed that in childhood. Not any longer. Mum was wrong. I keep telling myself.

I'm standing here, waiting under the pale dawn sky, on this empty platform. It's almost morning. From afar, the city stands like an unresting monster, attempting to reach

the sky, with its bodies of glass and iron, under the not yet perceptible brown line of pollution.

It's not yet time.

The cloudless sky has begun to project scales of light over the dry, brown land around the platform, too dim to be bright, like a regular summer morning. Perhaps it was this barren earth, photophobic, opaque, lifeless, that was repelling it. The earth doesn't breathe and I no longer wonder why.

I wonder.

Mum was wrong. There was one thing she didn't know, or didn't come to think of.

On a train journey, death always comes up as a process. Never as an event. You rot away in your seat, suitcase in hand—the reliquary of your past—, waiting for the journey to cease. But I'm still young. And I'm still waiting; hands empty. Not inside the train, however.

I'm here, waiting over this concrete floor. I can hear the train coming, stirring the desecrated nature around, not yet awake at this stage. Its whistle breaks the air, warning, reminding me: it's time.

I'm not afraid.

It's coming. Closer. Closer each time. Reminding me: it's almost time.

This be the event.

Mum failed to grasp life with her metaphor. I couldn't really grasp life myself either. It was something too big to handle. It didn't quite fit in a piece of luggage.

It's time.

'Life is all about trains'. How paradoxical. I have no destination to reach. There will be no journey. No past, no future.

I don't need a suitcase.

Bioprofile of the author: Nacida en Caracas, Venezuela; residente en Madrid desde los seis años, cursa grado en Estudios Ingleses en la Universidad Complutense. Sus logros académicos le han merecido diversas becas y premios, entre ellos la Beca de Excelencia de la Comunidad de Madrid, de la que es beneficiaria desde 2011. Realizó una estancia de un año en la Universidad de Edimburgo, donde también fue premiada gracias a sus méritos. Actualmente es becaria de colaboración del Departamento de Filología Inglesa II. Se dedica a la fotografía como aficionada, y aunque ha dedicado la escritura a un plano esencialmente personal, ha sido galardonada con premios en los certámenes en los que ha participado: a los dieciséis años obtuvo el primer premio en la categoría juvenil de narrativa del II Concurso de Literatura Agustín Díaz; y en 2015 recibió el tercer premio en el IV Certamen de Relato Breve Virginia Woolf.

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