

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> 11:42 p.m.

Only to establish in writing, do I type: My friend, el Flaco, is dead.

I was woken up by the ringing of my telephone at God knows what hour this morning; the answering machine took the call and from my bedroom I heard the voice of Lili, raucous as always, or more so than always, begging me to answer the phone. Needless to say, I did not obey and I remained in bed, trying to sleep, though I did not fully go back to sleep, despite not having woken up all that much either. I am not sure for how long, but the phone rang again and again I heard Lili's voice. So then I did get up for the phone, because this time I was more awake and also because with the second call I got the impression that it must be something important. When I answered, she told me she had bad news, and I thought "Oh no, not Ruben." But no; it was el Flaco. Completely unexpected.

Now I can write, thankfully, the thoughts I have towards this shocking news. Between sleep, I saw that, mysteriously, during a dream my mind had been working and now handed me an answer. Appearing before my mind was the phrase: "Key number one: the death of my mother." In effect, it is surely one of the keys that the child had thrown into the sand in that gazebo a few days ago. For many reasons that death was very painful for me; it filled me with guilt and terror for a long time, almost years—not in one long stream, only in bursts. It had taken many sessions of therapy, but I did manage to bring back the memory of my mother as alive and well, with many of her good qualities highlighted. I had felt relief when I told the therapist (well, not exactly a therapist, but a psychiatrist): "My mother stopped being for me a pile of bones; I feel her presence alive in me." After that I had a few relapses, but during those relapse I could speak about it with Chl, and always then the next day my mother would disappear completely from my mind. A great relief. In any case, my mother's death wasn't all that over in me, and today something let me know. Today I came to the realization that what went missing after her passing was the "reset" her presence provided me: whenever I felt saturated by something and couldn't find a way out, or there seemed to be something that needed to be fix, I would go see her where she lived, my grandparents old home, and I would stay however long was necessary, generally a week, to feel better. After arriving, I would begin by going straight to sleep; if it was early in the afternoon, that is, I still went to sleep, at least for a few hours. I attributed my need to sleep to the trip (bus trip), but it wasn't so; I simply needed to rest day in and day out for a while, under the protective supervision of my mother, a presence which loosed me up and allowed me to enter a profound sleep. After those two or three hours of rest/nap I

would wake up as if drugged, with the brain completely muddled and later, slowly, I would begin the exchange of news with my mother. Often I had to stop her so she wouldn't scarf all the information down at once. In the days that would follow I would sleep a lot, and later I would get to the point where I would want to return to my apartment in Montevideo. Only then could I leave. It has been years since I haven't had someone take care of my sleep. And not only my sleep, but also my intake of food; with my mother, I had nothing to do but eat and sleep. Now, more than ever, I need exactly that. It has been too long since I've needed it, but suddenly today I see and feel it clearly: I have no way of giving myself a "reset" because I always have something to occupy my time with. So, right, getting to the point: I don't rest well, and it's been ages since I've rested well. Any other, non-maternal form of "relax" won't do; I can't control my mind. I don't know where I can find a mother, much less at this age. That isn't to say I couldn't at least try to find someone to monitor my rest, and that could provide meals for me for some time. I mean, that is exactly what I need for my "return to myself" that I pretend to get started.

This afternoon I went to, or tried to, do some shopping. I needed some round metallic tables, short ones, to put next to the couches. It isn't that I'm becoming addicted house purchases; it's just that these tables are a necessity, like it is a necessity I find a floor lamp too. It's all about building a place of reading and rest. And for the reading I need a source of light (appropriate light). The floor lamps that they were selling were too expensive, not to mention too short. I need something a little taller, because I require strong light, and if the lamp is too short then the heat emitted by the light will burn my head, and of course that doesn't do me any good. Also what doesn't help me is a light that is excessively concentrated or extremely white over a sheet of book paper; that negatively affects my eye sight. I need something similar to overhead lighting, but over my book and a little less diffused. Well, that doesn't exist, and I have the feeling I will have to invent something as always; my solutions tend to be efficient, but generally are antithetical and behave as an expression of my own eccentricity. It isn't the case, though; they are merely the practical solutions of a poor man who has had to make do with what he's got.

And sure, I don't feel a thing—over the death of my friend Flaco, I meant to say, but also in general. I started to worry, a few hours ago that is, about my lack of emotions or sentiments in general. I feel nothing. This means that I have gone back to my old self, sinking, burying myself in apathetic disinterest. The price to care is too high. I am not even sure how to summon together my emotions anyway.