

A PRAYER FOR MY FATHER

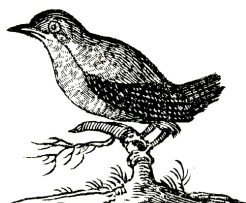
Sebastián Díaz Barriga



HERRING PUBLISHERS

A PRAYER FOR MY FATHER

Sebastián Díaz Barriga



HERRING PUBLISHERS

First edition: *Un rezo para mi padre*, 2018

First edition in English: A Prayer for my Father, 2020

Book design by:

Oliver Herring

Translated by:

Delphine Tomes

& Leary Herring

Artwork by:

Susana del Rosario

Printed in risograph (RZ390) and bible paper by:

@goldrainbooks

© Sebastián Díaz Barriga

© Herring Publishers México

Querétaro, Qro.

Printed in Mexico

*You know what they say?
They say, "Daddy you're a fool to cry
You're a fool to cry
You're a fool to cry
And it makes me wonder why"*

The Rolling Stones

*Father, you left me
But I never left you
I needed you
But you didn't need me
So
I just got to tell
Goodbye
Goodbye*

John Lennon



QUICQUID ENIM TU ES
SUBSTANTIALITER,
HOC EGO SUM

my dad used to use latex
gloves,
but he did not iron his shirts.
he shaved his head

twice daily.
he came up with a new hairstyle every August.
he would ride a motorcycle,
showing it off in the neighborhoods,
in bars,
in clubs,
with prostitutes.

[he would buy 20 grams .
·
·
· he would snort the 20 grams.]

his nose would bleed and he would laugh,
he would cry,
he would pee,
on himself,

and again
he would laugh
(on himself).

my dad used latex gloves,
but he never dressed as a sailor.
he smoked a lot,
but he never shot up.

my dad smelled like freshly baked poppy,
he hand-washed his socks,
 he would put on his shirt and tailcoat,
 and go out to show off
 his new hair style.

my dad
never owned latex gloves.

somebody shot me
in a public restroom.
I realized when I got home;
I took off my boots,
turned on the TV
and started drinking.
I watched a porn movie until I fell asleep.

the next day,
at work,
they said:
looking good, *berna*.
did you do something to your hair?

it's been
so long
that it must
be Tuesday
already.
today
my son
is born
and I am
25 years
old.

I don't know who I am

chopper went along with you,
though I never noticed the difference
between you. both desired
-anxiously-
to become god;
you pulled each other's pants
down in public,
jumped fences,
drank gasoline,
fought with ice picks
and came back with half an ear
on a polystyrene plate.

I left the piece you gave me
in a restroom on the highway;
now it's an ashtray
traveling along
kilometer 57.

August 20th 1992.

I woke up, very sad, before dawn. I just wanted to write something, anything; to myself.



Child custody, 2012. Unknown author.



how many saints does it take to sniff 20 grams?



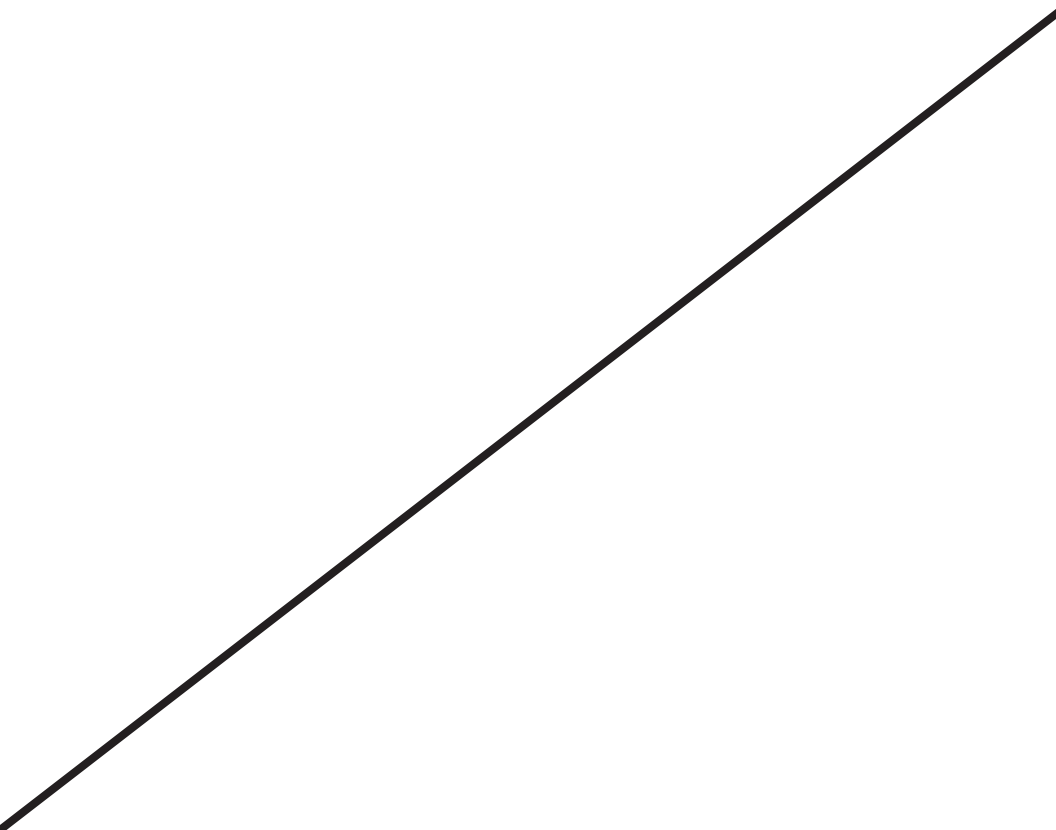
who am I?

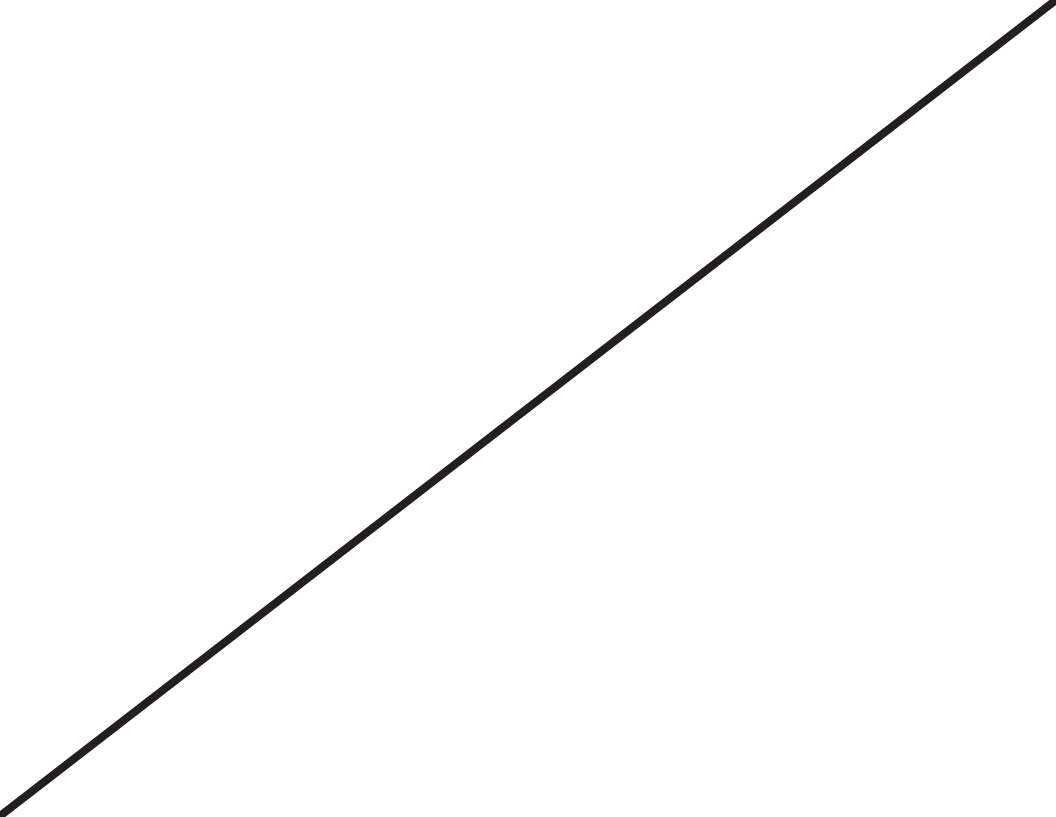
it's been
so long
that it must
be Tuesday
already.
today my father died
I'm 25 years
old.

without realizing it

I am falling, arms open wide, towards the zenith.
the sky no longer holds my feet.

dad knew how to hide
his fights
his hpv
his baldness
his *uzi*
and his illegal taxicab





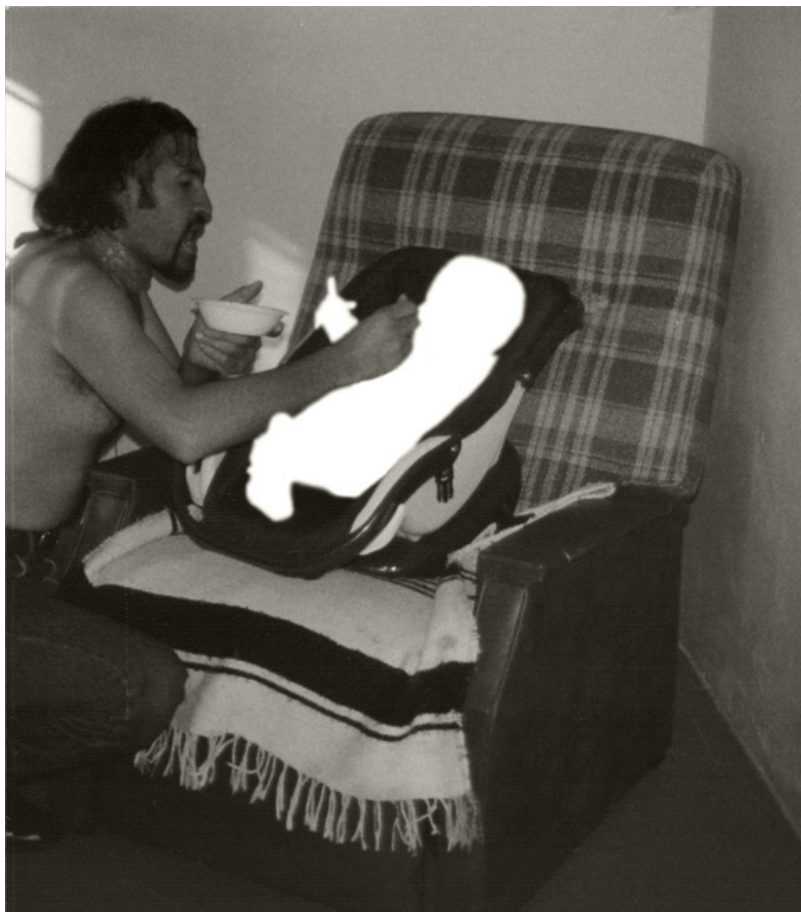
dad didn't know
how to hide
his fights
his hpv
his baldness
his *nazi*
and his illegal taxicab



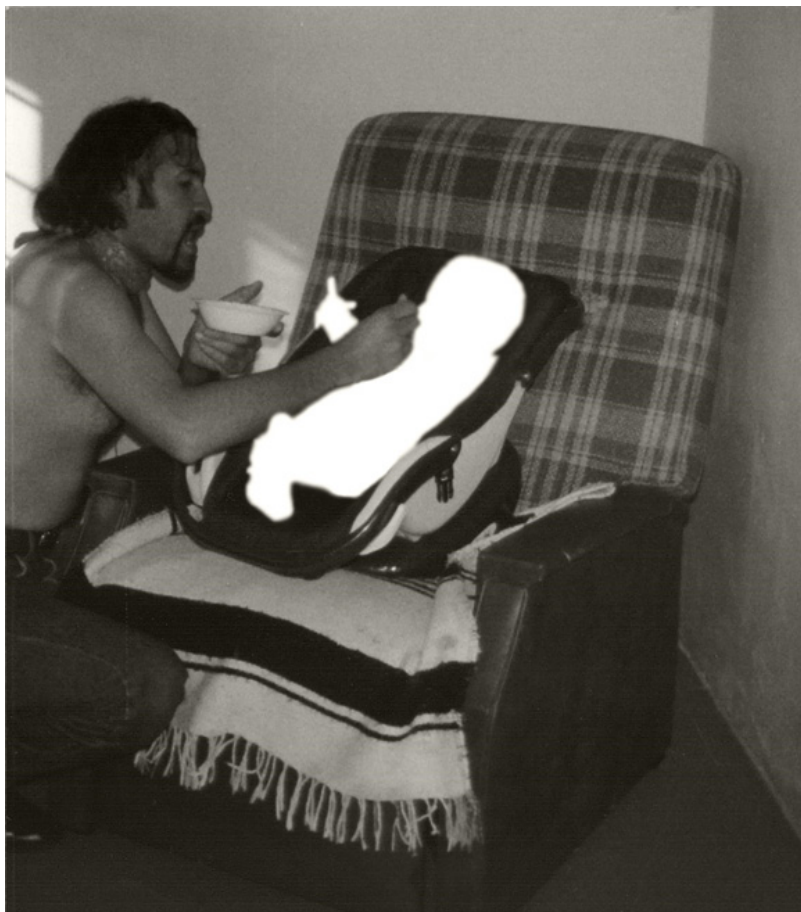
Allegory of the helpless



Allegory of the helpless



Allegory of abandonment



Allegory of abandonment

From ▼ barrigasebastian@hotmail.com (Barry Tuning and Cycles)

CC

CC

To sebastian.barriga.gonzalez@gmail.com

Subject

Son:

poetry is useless
because everything is useless;
everything that hurts has an empty feeling.
I started talking to myself
I think
or rather
I started to make up sounds
that I don't know how to pronounce:
I'd like to know
to whom I have been speaking all this time.
everything that hurts has an empty feeling
and everything that has an empty feeling ends up
disappearing
in a spiral of smoke
on a Monday night
while you cry
and write yourself this poem.

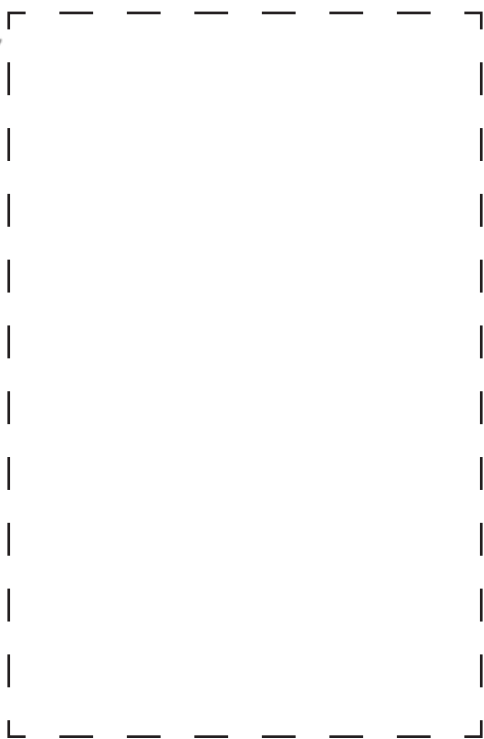
B.S.B.S

I don't know where I spent the last days of my life
I got lost
after a street fight.
I walked for hours;
I said the Lord's prayer
and burst out laughing.
I found my face
over someone else's head.
how I regret not having cut it off
with a single blow
and fleeing.
all right
that's all:
now they can only identify me
from the cigarette burns
on my body.

this is my cry,
so listen carefully:
it is sordid,
irremediable.
nothing has been the same
and yet
things have not changed either.
now I am 10 years old
and seeing, for the first time
a pornographic scene.

I will never forget
the aftertaste
of the bean and cheese sandwich.

THE DOORS WILL ALWAYS BE OPEN FOR THE
WORLD



t h i s m o r n i n g i s a d r e a m

e v e r y o n e t h i n k s t h a t t h e o t h e r
o n e i s t h e d r e a m e r

I woke up:

I was six years old with twelve baby teeth.

you appeared by my side:

you cried as you touched my face

while you were saying

that the doors will always be open

for the world.

it's the summer of 2018

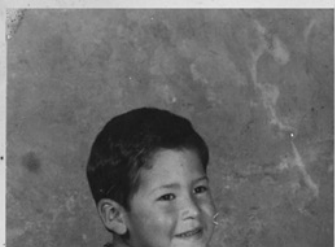
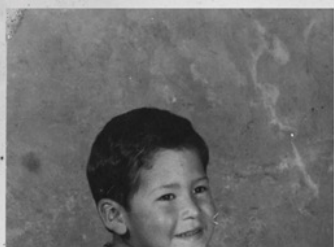
I wake up, before dawn,

just to write to myself:

The door is still here

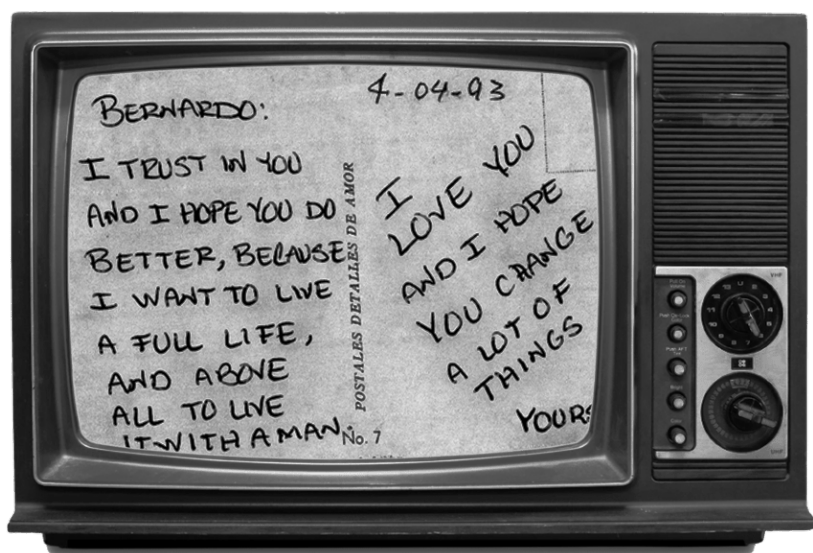
to die of love
is a kiss with herpes
at three in the morning;
a common place
veiled as a faceless embryo.
I cut my tongue with my canines
I asked god for forgiveness
I bought a mirror.

my father still helps me:
he removes the glasses from my feet
and kisses the wounds.



he fled
to cuernavaca
to querétaro
to the west
to the south
to the southwest
he abandoned
his father
his son
his wife
his lover
he bought
tobacco
gum
cocaine
latex gloves
and leather boots
he made stops at
lakes
gas stations
juice stands
and zoos.
he drove an illegal taxicab,
taped home movies
and ate instant soup.

he lit a cigarette
-as he watched cartoons-
and he exploded into a thousand pieces
in front of the TV.



Bonus tracks
(One evening in June I almost died here)

**I had to get out of the shower
to write this down**

today is your 47th birthday
and I'm sitting here alone
in the 21st century
writing this poem
on a tiny piece of paper:

I miss you so much

a fabulous game called “love”

as a child
my parents used to play
this fabulous game:
although the aim
is still unknown
the game arrived
to their relationship
as a forgotten quarter does
on an empty street
in mexico city
it seemed to say:

hey!

are you going to grab me or what?

I have been here all day

and I just wanna go back home

I'm so fucking tired.

back then, dad
pretended to send money
-instead of love-
to mom's debit card.
the nearest ATM machine
was about an hour away
so we used to cross
the whole town
in our 1970 VW beetle
just to find out
that there was no money
or love
or anything else.

mom's card
my mom
dad's lover
and the neighbor's dog
they were all empty

I felt so sad
I just wanted a new pair of socks,
a green pencil
and, perhaps
a tiny little fish
whose love
wouldn't leave
my hands.

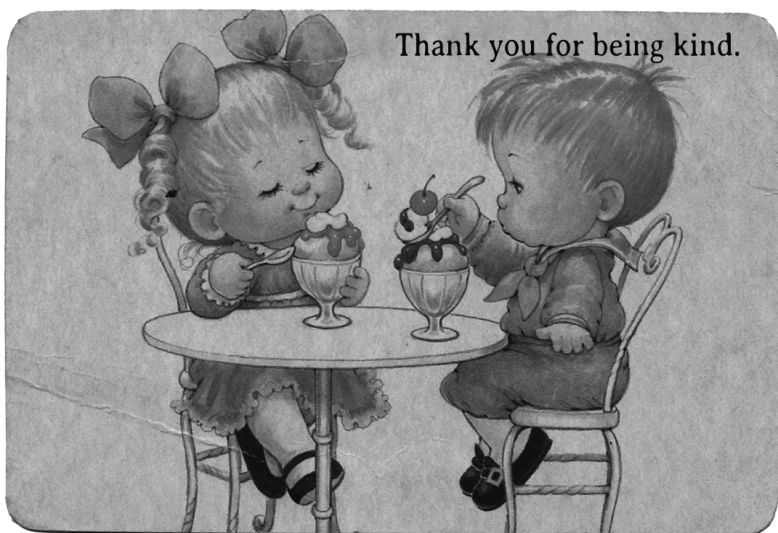
wind spell

I never learned how to whistle
I always waited
for you
for your lessons
and your *what's up buddy?*
do you need any help with that math?
I'll be right here
for you

now that you are gone
my voice
my laugh
and even my weeping
are stronger

thank you so much
and have a good night.

Thank you for being kind.



רקש

A

Prayer For My Father

by Sebastián Díaz Barriga

was printed in February

by @goldrainbooks

Querétaro,

Mexico

2020

A PRAYER FOR MY FATHER is a (an) (auto) biography where fiction and reality travel along (visual) poetry. It is also an eternal search of identity inside a heartbreaking landscape. Everything ends up being a deep and feverish howl: the howl of an abandoned son.

SEBASTIÁN DÍAZ BARRIGA (Mexico City, 1998). In 2018 he wrote his first book. Currently he is studying cinematography at CCC UNAM. He lies in the 21th century while dreaming about life.

sebastian.barriga.gonzalez@gmail.com