

MISFORTUNES

Luzma Umpierre

You are rubbing your eyes again.

Older, as they are now

drier,

tears on end...

In Persia women saved their teardrops in glass flasks.

Where have you preserved yours?

Te miro, Patricia,

restregarte los ojos,

ojos vacíos, sin lágrimas,

secos...

Los años te han robado la humedad del llanto.

Tears gone as years passed acquiescing to men fighting altogether,

each other, for nimiedades

while still we have no cures for our daughters' illnesses,

or for the rapes in South Africa in infancy

by a squad of man kind asserting that a fresh virgo

can cure an endless plague.

Y recuerdo la primera vez que vi llorar a mi padre:

una niña violada en el barrio

y nadie pudo salvarla.

Castración, pedía papá en sus lágrimas,

para el monstruo que no supo ser a father.

Experts tell me that a thin strip of filter paper,
placed at the edge of the eye,
can measure your tears.

They call it a Schirmer's test.

I see it differently.

Tears bathe the eye,
washing out dust and debris.

At times, the eye doesn't produce enough tears,
not for lack of moisture
but from costly writhing.

I call that loss.

And I have named it misfortune.