

Duende

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I will explore the concept of *duende* in this piece of writing, and imbue it with my own understanding. Aside from meaning elf, goblin or spirit, duende has something of the English terms: *verve*, *panache*, *flamboyance*. The term also has deeper and more florid roots, and, is more than the merely external glint or attractive vigor of *verve* or the flame in *flamboyance*; or the pizazz and plume in *panache*.

Dance, as the most complete art form that comprises the most levels of consciousness—is perhaps the greatest potential embodiment of this chthonic spirit which surges from the tenebrous, ill-defined earth. The land that is continuously interrupted by seismic tremors. The realm of a magical rumor or whisper. We are engaging the shakiest ground upon which cannot be fastened the certain home of the faithful--based upon the sobering, light counsels of the world's so-called great religions. Peace, security, stability are indispensable modes of life in the world, just as are openness and transparency. However, duende is unreal, and running along a fault line, yet it is so undeniable. The mystical complements of mainstream religions likely account in one way or other, perhaps in annotated form, for the *crevices* in the walls or tapestry of their tales. However, it has not been my experience that these are greatly considered; lest the grand narratives become too tattered. Duende, on the other hand, is latent in the negative spaces of any tapestry or dance. Also, in the pictorial landscapes of painters and poets; specifically, the points of threads of color, light and shade—reveal the multiplicative and incomplete worlds they depict. As well as the libidinous spiders that crawl all over the page or canvas. We are dealing with something unconventional and fractious, an alternative to the light-illustrations of harmonious proportions which are distastefully and deceptively *complete*. Their savor leaves a decaying residue upon the palate.

There is something disingenuous about the therapist, the teacher, the friend, or prophet who--containing so much unresolved darkness in their psyche—only emits phrases that resound with a holistic and harmonious picture. No matter how resonant and fitting their light-codes may be—something is left to be desired. Even if the result is sustained happiness—somewhere doors are creaking with a crawly sound. Contentment is a desirous state, but they who evade the hairline cracks in the walls are only ostensibly functional. Some of them may assist in raising others' vibrations, but none of the ones I know dip long enough into the dark aquifers of the irrational earth with its scintillas of duende. Here is a magnetism which cannot fit into the panoramas or orchestras of superlative harmony. Rather than closing the gaps and sealing them with the contented amnesia of light—duende makes from the fabric--a dark groove, before it aborts itself. Religionists are afraid of so many types of duende which might push a wedge between the polarities of their beliefs. Rather, they must maintain these closed at all times. Religion is sedative, and the salve is the illusion of completeness and consistency. Why else do religionists become agitated when one challenges the edifices of their belief which are, after all, only built upon the tremulous fire of the irrational and pitiless void.

Everything in the universe is cast sub-consciously into the reliefs of phantasmagorical chaos fashioned perennially from fire and shadow. Anyone, including religious traditionalists, can enjoy the interplays of light and shade where the two overlap and superposition. At this liminal juncture something unsanctioned and devilish occurs which defies the plead for sanity and rational agenda; as well as the necessity to maintain a safe distance between reason and the *limbus* (edge) of the known. In duende's intersections belief in wholesomeness and closure is suspended for everyone. I desire to be this duende; this diabolical mage--in everything I do; undeniable as an entrancing and secret space that opens, and from which leaps a Luciferian instance.

The Spanish chant Ole! which is attributed in its origins to the Middle East, was said to have originated there as "Allah!" Something the people start yelling in praise of the vital energy of any spectacular performance. I both like and dislike "Allah." God is a brittle concept, because, like faith and elusive harmony, it inevitably decays and betrays. It returns after, true, but too much harmony, like the annoying *bliss-ninny* therapist—conceals the duende; that special underlying dark current or, better said, zone. Duende is more likable. There should be some other utterance other than "Allah" that is not so fragile; it is unlike duende to invoke a holy and wholesome source. An overarching super being upon whose mercy and illumination we depend. Forget God tonight. In the manic whirl of a wild night of dancing—we are something and somewhere we can't define. Non-local, duende is harder to pin point or delineate. Muses are clearer as they limn the aforesaid harmonies. They are spiral trains of light which we channel into the rivers and mountains and cloud-bestrewn skies of word paintings and visual displays. The star-stippled skies are fine for a while, but they too will dwindle after the lapse of night. Duende is the misstep. The severance of the stem of life from which spurt the sanguine rivulets of mythological creatures who are neither good nor bad. Their tears are more than pitiful, entrancing. Beyond duality, they can go anywhere; so, they may as well coincide with the undesignated dimensions. They are full of a dashing vitalness that cannot be delineated or incorporated into a sound world view. Duende is silent and dark. It is felt in the strut of the flamenco dancer as snappy, jaunty, or as a note of swagger or funk. These are more captivating than erotic charge, because charisma trumps mere sex appeal or glandular compulsion.

Duende is the hidden omission in a sinusoidal wave, suggestive of unadulterated liminal space which we experience as charm. The skip in the line where spectators suspend belief and breath. It is the happy accident or the pellicle-tare of the programmed transmission, or, the momentary and screen-stuttering lapse; as if we found God, the director, fapping himself in a corner. And it was the coolest thing we ever saw. Perhaps, archangels are grand, but duende is wicked, and it wrests the mediocre tele-feast from the hands of our overseers. Instead, it opens a space for a forbidden step from nowhere into nowhere known. It is enthralling.

Duende is in the fragmented nonsensicality; it is the aphasiac devil who resorts to a hip gesture, rather than words. As Lorca evokes: the charming blush of an old man's wizened face. In this crimson circle—in this spot that is only a lapse—a sullied, yet

fulgid, little heart grows that belongs to none. Duende is godless and godly at once; the liminal stich like a riddle that runs along the dwindling middle.

There is a seductive and hypnotic *falling* or cadence to duende; the disappearing act of the magician, except that the fallen place cannot be located. I am interested in Duende as a mode of existence. I dance against the rhythm. I let meaning break down in me and all around, because that not only evades the futility of opining and polemic, but is the beginning of subversion. It is the inception of the novel and unprecedented art movement, which shall not be codified or elaborated. Though discourses only be the syntaxes of symbolism—duende is more real because it is unreal or surreal. It is the misfit; the sexy virus; the upending wild card. I like to make the trains of speech of daily conversation garble across the interface of life like a malfunction in life's directorship. I care nothing for operating systems. I make rules that serve my ends. I enjoy my God complex, where all is jest. I effulge charming energies through the xylophones of my multiple etheric bodies; let the girls read the sparkling imprints of quantum melodies upon my cornea; as their stirred eyes blur laterally with arousal. Third-eye compliments are the snuff of magic; of centaurs and unicorns and aimless suns that spurn all that is hard and hollow. The emerald of the deepest eve where the ostentatious light must submit to his still more veridical daughter, with vitreous eyes, stoned and lucid, embraced by the shade. A world of magic where compliments are again spoken at the deepest string in the soul, and, played close, decimating logic. A limb is broken off in the process; a token of a visitation from beauty: the lady with no postal code. If you keep your distance with rhetoric, you shall be ejected. I desire to taste the poison darts of a love beyond constructs. A love soaked in the scrambling linguistics of a sun that kills and wants to be killed in turn; of a trenchant muse who vitiates herself and the poet with lust unalloyed, giving no quarter. Until he self-aborts triumphant, for she is him; and he is her, and all is phantom. Let everyone hinge off everything and every sentient one. *Likho* in Russian is a parallel concept to duende. It spans meanings from complete loss and destitution in the Biblical sense of Job, to the overstepping criminal; as well as dashing and valiant, intrepid, smart, nimble; as well as perhaps: superfluous, supernumerary or without. *Likho* is related to duende where Lorca refers to Christ's "ten-fingered hand" as he rests on the cross. In some descriptions of the folkloric background of duende there are evocations of six-fingered humans. The sense is an aberrant growth; something sinister (left-handed) that arouses suspicion; an omen of a sort that can lead to being "without" grace or protection or life. *Likho* has more severe implications than duende, at first glance; for duende is associated more with the potential information of creative expression. On the other hand, Lorca cites that in bullfighting the only true duende is in the fighter who has been "bitten." This brush with the ultimate negative space of all: *death*, takes duende to the next level. The precipice that edges *likho*--enhances the entrancing seduction of duende and its interplay with the exit to the unknown and irrational quantity of terminus: or *likho's* without.

Lorca says that many artists merely feign duende, but they are soon exposed. He also suggests that duende can exist in trifles and brevity. There is duende in *Tik Tok* videos where girls style whimsically with no lofty purpose other than to splash with a taste

of the diaphanous hem of death. The flashing of the flamenco dress in one's face. Love or hate it. When they hit directly, everyone is affected by these squelches of verve. After the tiresome tirades of light and the lengthy explanations, we might as well scramble the phrases, and unleash the corybantic dance moves, or, the gesture that arise from the debris; the deft and norm-defying. Charm and charisma can be painfully attractive with the sprinkling into wounds which yawn open with aching bliss. The negative space that yields the charismatic feat, or, vice versa. The repulsion-attraction of the bullfighter's unholy provocation of fate—is the same lifting of the hem of life—to reveal the dark matter emitting an undeniable signal of radiant activity of alternate order. The dweebs dare not go there—because their tools cannot measure any discernable proportion. Not in thought or action.

Cool friends engage the weird; the strange; and the superfluous of *likho*. Those who are only concerned with the amnesiac harmony, and who only wish to know what can be measured, calculated and readily understood—are less likely to engage the sinister or diabolical of *likho*. Only in ways that are quantifiable such as in addressing violent incidents, but not in embodied actions. They may or may not enjoy duende; perhaps only to the extent that their mind does not reach too close to the precipice—lest they lose its stake in reality.

The elves, according to lore, are missing thumbs as they grossly miscalculate cutting the finger nails of children, severing their whole fingers. There is an overstepping, but also an adumbration of the unknown and undisclosed in the audacity of *likho*.

Great sportsmen are said to “slaughter” their opponents; their heads are lobbed right off without precision or pity. The trouncing of the intrepid is otherworldly as it overflows the physical frames of triumphant athletes and matadors ignited by a fire that compresses, decompresses, radiates, that lies waiting in the shadows. It irrationally reappears as flames that menace in unpredictable flashes. It is in the domain of Bruce Lee and his proteges, devastating with their tremulous reign, their lightning dashes. They penetrate the quantum field of possibilities beyond normative metrics, where other fighters mainly manifest only masculine aggression and coarse adrenaline. These astound much less. The former dance as much as they fight.

The clear dialectics of spirituality bore and tire. Let's lose ourselves in the fractured centrifugal rays of the source, for the light pictures have grown stale, stagnant. I want the smallest degree of separation possible from the movable precipice of death; I desire to be valiant, entranced by duende. Don't speak to me anymore of roses and crucifixes where realms intersect. I'll meet you at the maddening point off center by much less than millimeters, and which therefore breeds the requisites for the nimblest mind. The unstable microgram of non-human entities that subvert reason and the standardized. Bring me closer to the you who falls into unprecedented cadences, splitting by the wayside as your multiple doppelgangers.

Duende is in the ancient, wrinkled and fetid witch that is intimate and never leaves misunderstandings or falsity. Though her words are oft frigid and wicked, she is not disingenuous. And she won't deflect the echoes of the heart with radiant facades. Neither is she the nefarious hag whose eyes flare into beady specks with the self-contempt for her own ignorance, as she peevishly reverses her blame outwards. Liquidate the mediocre and salty cunt, but also the holy woman, the healer; I despise

her, also, for her breaches of logic are masquerading as loving counsel. They are tight-fisted love shards scraped off a miserly heart that won't acknowledge its own tenebrous empires. Duende creates a lurid escape, whereas the light as we experience it pretends to be whole, but this wholeness soon decays; it dissipates as the ghouls of a bad dream. Muses soar above; they are beauty and grandeur. They christen with the clarion melody as in *lindo*, the *legit*, pretty and pure. These vertices, these diadems that descend are for days in the kingdom, but the duende's arrival that is summoned from the aforementioned *non-local* point is the nadir or dark breach in the code—made ineffably haunting and unconventionally handsome.

There is the ache of the chthonic nostalgia in our spirit-bodies for the heritage we lost in our veins, leaving us lusting for the gory glory of nature—as we extricated ourselves from the fecundity of the physical mesh through evolutionary abstraction. The ache is momentarily gratified in the entrancement of the dark earthly energy of duende. We enter into brief spells with the dark spirit, and execute the favor; it is perhaps a muscle that can be strengthened until it functions as naturally as drinking water; as simple as taking a step or more towards the precipice. Lorca describes it as a struggle with death; interesting choice of words; struggle suggests a flexing. Yes. In fact, it is an energy flash like plashing in the waters of the unconscious that favor this tension, and make miraculous instances of flotation or buoyancy. The point at which the liminal state discloses the sub-liminal: the magical innerworkings of the self-creating masterpiece of the universe. Though the mystery cannot be fully told; and so, none is any the wiser.

Duende is potential, and therefore rises with the mantle of the earth in the very seismic tremors that can't be traced fast enough. It is the light shimmering across the face of the water; the almost imperceptible surge in the physics of the ripples' movements; a surge that is essentially formless and godless. This creative imp, be neither good, nor bad. The energy flash of the ripples, we use to rivet witnesses as we etch the fleeting crest of the trceries of clear fire which angelic muses must envy, for these crests occur without delay, without regress or progress, without defined manifestation. Their cursor blinks like the pulse of a creation without a creator.

I am oft bored of the muse's afterthought of beauty with her aesthetic catalogues. I am mainly concerned with fun. With the duende as an accomplice, one is in the mad and devilish sanctum of the moment where past and future are suspended; where modulations of the impossible present or center point yield negative spaces leaping forth, and mocking the face of the normative binary code. Any who are informed by duende, become the leak that the light masters cannot stamp out like a viper whispering the secrets of the fateful pre-existent garden; igniting the burlap of boring poets and dancers who dare not approach the edge, though they possess sterling technique.

Let the ungodly duende possess you; this shape-shifting entity, lacking stature, and who plays everything so close to the marrow. It prefers the hemlock and the thorn of the rose; as well as the petals and parts of the lust-inducement over the lust itself or even the heaving bosom. Nay, beyond that: the libidinous mites or whatever micro-parasites who vitiate the flower's, even the anima's and animus's substance. Once more, the backwards or sidestep may fall one into the sweet entrapment of death,

with no end other than the soul-sacrifice of the intersection. This dirty gnome rapt with the brain of a myriad poisons, forgetting everything; to be eaten, to eat; and for this trance to surge, to surge, to surge; to flow, to flow, to flow. Here there is nothing traceable, only a manic flicker that vanishes as soon as it appears. Duende is insatiable, even as it is chill; it is so cool that it can walk through fire, and go where none go; nowhere in particular; with no destination or agenda.

In his essay, Lorca talks about Spain as a place enchanted with death; the same way other places might be enchanted with forests. He describes the barren, rock strewn and arid landscapes of the Iberian country. With a little imagination one might expect to find broken skulls as well on the ground. Lorca cites how many Spaniards live their whole lives indoors, as if their spirit-possessed houses captivated them within the shadow of death. There might be a denial of life and light; a repose in the shade of potential or negative space. Spanish people are straightforward and harsh in tone; even blunt. They are unlike the sweeter and gentler Latins who in part descended from them. They are the only people who use the expression: "I shit on God", something which for other cultures, including their descendants, would be shocking and terrible. Though duende will make its odd glint from the fecal and the miasma of inmost blasphemy. Awesome.

I live in Spain and wrote a poem called *Heaven*, which takes place in Spain. This includes my concept about Spain being the terrestrial correspondence of heaven. Of course, I cannot prove it, but in my personal mythos Spain is the country that reflects heaven most exactly. Something about Spain's simple, fresh and delicious cuisine with tomatoes ripened under the bald sun; its minimalism and elegance; its curt people and beautiful girls; something about this paradisaal destination; and the lingering and vague promise of romance in the air--make a stay in Spain like a visit to the blank canvas of death's interface. Perhaps a reassuring wink to the tired and weary or worried. The Spanish sun is purged of colors and forms; so, expect something stupendous and bright; gratifying and gifting beyond all things.

The poem takes place in a health spa in Marbella. The doctor, a Galician woman, who is super laid back, is seen by me from a distance, as she gazes bleary-eyed to the side, as one of the clients tells her something. I view the scene from inside the glass elevator as it ascends. The two women are on another level of the complex. Twice that day I envision the similar scene; in both cases the doctor has the same strange visage. That look haunted me for some days; it was a fractal picture of a greater uncertainty that inevitably besets all who are caught in the grip of mysterious existence. The word "existence" meaning a "stepping forth"; as if something has been unveiled; but, to whom? by whom? For what purpose? What is on the other side of the veil? The same thing? Nothing? This point of alteration can take the form of random images which relate to the placeless surface of death; the indecipherable plane whose riddle often casts its self into the shimmering dark magic of duende. Duende is the alluring indicator that there is something curved and misplaced in the mix which may even subvert the consensual paradigms which deal in the currency of manifest light; the staid, structured and boringly reasonable. There are always creative loopholes in every scheme or medium. The duendes are the sexy leaks of syncopated tones and vibrations like skeletal rattles that occasionally well up from

the realm we conventionally attribute to the dark and florid earth. Ole!