

The Legal Studies Forum

Hearing

The hours pass slowly,
stretch themselves,
in the quadrangle
of the clock
an agonizing
lapsing.

A fixed look
into empty space
between two
struggling reasons.

The blank mind
discovers lives
hidden between
files and documents.

Reckless strokes
outline feelings,
pack afflictions,
through minute rules
every other minute
get things right, affirm and
resolve lives.

Every other minute,
in painstaking rules,
the systematic law
is applied to life,
balancing
the joys and the sorrows.

Children

No final ruling will be issued on the case if it is not previously demonstrated that the situation of minor children has been resolved...

- Section 167, Uruguayan Civil Code

Like debris from the cave-in, under the throbbing darkness, tenuous shelter for grievances. Like remains from the abyss, under cover of a pillow's silence, protection of wet sheets. Darkness of adult abandonment, engrossed in the unworthy fight. Darkness of ignorance, deceived in the somber quietness of hallow-eyed children, forgotten fruits, torn in two-lies, playing at being truths.

Res Judicata

Over and over again.

Up to the elbows,

extreme situation,

no truce,

the decision oppresses,

strangles.

Over and over again.

Anguish between my hands.

Over and over again.

They pile up,

overcrowd, accumulate,

a sheaf of different,

unique, exceptional

circumstances

awaiting

a resolution

that will release them from

the responsibility

of deciphering life.

Over and over again.

I wait for an inkling,

a sign

that will enable me to

discern and avert

catastrophe.

- Translated from the Spanish by Laura Chalar