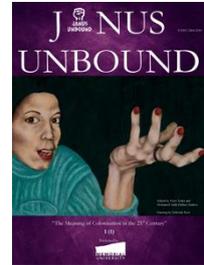

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Amazonia

Rebecca Salazar



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is there a word for grieving
the destruction of an ecosystem
that has kept you breathing
that has stood for untold generations
of the ancestors you wish you got to know

*it seems foolish to discuss nature w/o talking about endemic poverty which seems foolish to
discuss w/o talking about corporations given human agency which seems foolish to discuss w/o
talking about colonialism which seems foolish to discuss w/o talking about misogyny*

the cure for my traumatic sexual dysfunction
is medicine that causes sexual dysfunction
and my rapist just became a father

as fascists burn the land i long for
the country i live in sends matches,
buys pipelines, subsidizes mines
that bow to bolsonaro and burn forests,
displace mountains, un-inter the land's
soft-buried kin to mine for gold

*what is it to care humanly without thinking that humans are the most important things in the
picture?*

there are brown kids in concentration camps
brown men in concentration camps
brown women who are forced to drink from toilets
since they aren't given water in the concentration camps
and queers in concentration camps or killed
before they're thrown in concentration camps

i don't have children but the children
in the cages look like me and come from places
like my family is from, could be a million
distant cousins i can't reach, will never meet

the wrong amazon is burning / and the wrong ICE is melting

Amazonia

it is 2019 there are rapists and nazis
it is 2019 there are rapists and nazis in office
it is 2019 there's a rapist/nazi on campus
and the human rights office can't help me,
it would contravene his rights

never again is now
hear it: *never again is now*

i don't want children—how could i
when being human is not long for us
and when a brown face
is a sentence waged in melanin

white folks keep saying genocide
is too heavy a word
when they're not burning with its weight

some of us *cannot afford to theorize in splendid isolation while the death and devastation continue*

i don't want children
and my family is worried i will change my mind
when i grow old leaving no future generations,
but i'm worried that i won't survive, myself

and once, i birthed a dead thing,
not a child, but a flesh and tooth omen

when my cousins choose to birth
new generations they do not
do so to feed children
to cages. our *futurity*
is not a crime futurity is not
a crime futurity is not a crime

my body is a series of refusals

i try to survive my sick body on Wolastoq land
and offer what i can to heal this river
and the people who protect her
offer what i cannot reach to give
the land my body comes from
while its rivers blaze with fire

once whiteness has destroyed my home
once amazonia has burned,
i have to live to nurse our ghosts

Biography

Rebecca Salazar (she/they) is a writer, editor, and community organizer living on the unceded territory of the Wolastoqiyik. Published works include *sulphurtongue* (McClelland & Stewart), *the knife you need to justify the wound* (Rahila's Ghost) and *Guzzle* (Anstruther). Salazar edits for *The Fiddlehead* and *Plenitude* magazines, and co-hosts Elm & Ampersand podcast.

Notes

Sources for italicized passages: (1) from Tommy Pico's *Nature Poem* (2) from Alexis Shotwell's *Against Purity* (3) from tweets by @krzyzis and @RasBabaO, respectively (4) slogan of Never Again Action, a group of Jewish organizers mobilizing against the persecution of migrants in the US by ICE (5) from an essay on environmental racism by Dorceta Taylor (6) from another of the author's poems.