

No he querido saber, pero he sabido que una de las niñas, cuando ya no era niña y no hacía mucho que había regresado de su viaje de bodas, entró en el cuarto de baño, se puso frente al espejo, se abrió la blusa, se quitó el sostén y se buscó el corazón con la punta de la pistola de su propio padre, que estaba en el comedor con parte de la familia y tres invitados. 5 Cuando se oyó la detonación, unos cinco minutos después de que la niña hubiera abandonado la mesa, el padre no se levantó enseguida, sino que se quedó durante algunos segundos paralizado con la boca llena, sin atreverse a masticar ni a tragar ni menos aún a devolver el bocado al plato; y cuando por fin se alzó y corrió hacia el cuarto de baño, los que lo 10 siguieron vieron cómo mientras descubría el cuerpo ensangrentado de su hija y se echaba las manos a la cabeza iba pasando el bocado de carne de un lado a otro de la boca, sin saber todavía qué hacer con él. Llevaba la servilleta en la mano, y no la soltó hasta que al cabo de un rato reparó en el sostén tirado sobre el bidet, y entonces lo cubrió con el paño que tenía 15 a mano o tenía en la mano y sus labios habían manchado, como si le diera más vergüenza la visión de la prenda íntima que la del cuerpo derribado y semidesnudo con el que la prenda había estado en contacto hasta hacía muy poco: el cuerpo sentado a la mesa o alejándose por el pasillo o también de pie. Antes, con gesto automático, el padre había cerrado el grifo del 20 lavabo, el del agua fría, que estaba abierto con mucha presión. [. . .] La doncella, que en el momento del disparo había soltado sobre la mesa de mármol del office las fuentes vacías que acababa de traer, y por eso lo había confundido con su propio y simultáneo estrépito, había estado colocando luego en una bandeja, con mucho tiento y poca mano – 25 mientras el chico vaciaba sus cajas con ruido también –, la tarta helada que le habían mandado comprar aquella mañana por haber invitados; y una vez lista y montada la tarta, y cuando hubo calculado que en el comedor habrían terminado el segundo plato, la había llevado hasta allí y la había depositado sobre una mesa en la que, para su desconcierto, aún 30 había restos de carne y cubiertos y servilletas soltados de cualquier manera sobre el mantel y ningún comensal (sólo había un plato totalmente limpio, como si uno de ellos, la hija mayor, hubiera comido más rápido y lo hubiera rebañado además, o bien ni siquiera se hubiera servido carne).

(Marías 1999: 11, 16)

I did not want to know but I have since come to know that one of the girls, when she wasn't a girl anymore and hadn't long been back from her honeymoon, went into the bathroom, stood in front of the mirror, unbuttoned her blouse, took off her bra and aimed her own father's gun at her heart, her father at the time was in the dining room with other 5 members of the family and three guests. When they heard the shot, some five minutes after the girl had left the table, her father didn't get up at once, but stayed there for a few seconds, paralysed, his mouth still full of food, not daring to chew or swallow, far less to spit the food out on to his plate; and when he finally did get up and run to the bathroom, those who followed 10 him noticed that when he discovered the blood-spattered body of his daughter and clutched his head in his hands, he kept passing the mouthful of meat from one cheek to the other, still not knowing what to do with it. He was carrying his napkin in one hand and he didn't let go of it until, after a few moments, he noticed the bra that had been flung into the bidet 15 and he covered it with the one piece of cloth that he had to hand or rather in his hand and which his lips had sullied, as if he were more ashamed of the sight of her underwear than of her fallen, half-naked body with which, until only a short time before, the article of underwear had been in contact: 20 the same body that had been sitting at the table, that had walked down the corridor, that had stood there. Before that, with an automatic gesture, the father had turned off the tap in the basin, the cold tap, which had been turned full on. [. . .] The maid who, at the precise moment when the shot rang out, had been setting down on the marble table in the scullery the 25 empty dishes she'd just brought through and had thus confused the noise of the shot with the clatter she herself was making, had since been arranging on another dish, with enormous care but little skill – the errand boy meanwhile was making just as much noise unpacking his boxes – the ice-cream cake she'd been told to buy that morning because there would 30 be guests for lunch; and once the cake was ready and duly arrayed on the plate, and when she judged that the people in the dining room would have finished their second course, she'd carried it through and placed it on the table on which, much to her bewilderment, there were still bits of meat on the plates and knives and forks and napkins scattered randomly about 35 the tablecloth, and not a single guest (there was only one absolutely clean plate, as if one of them, the eldest daughter, had eaten more quickly than the others and had even wiped her plate clean, or rather hadn't even served herself with any meat).

(Marías 2000: 3, 6)