

Broken bodies

Rojas Gaviria, Pilar Ximena

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Broken bodies

Pilar Rojas Gaviria 

School of Business, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Macul, Chile

ABSTRACT

The following trilogy draws on the lives of those afflicted by a chronic condition and their experiences of both consuming and being consumed by their illnesses. For the patient and his or her loved ones, living with the illness is an emotional roller-coaster that involves rapid transitions between devastation and joy. The poems in this series elaborate upon those emotional moments when patients and caregivers engage with ordinary household objects and pharmaceutical substances to explore the notion of the broken body and soul.

ARTICLE HISTORY

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KEYWORDS

Love; desire; chronic illness;
broken bodies



Container rose

Pale pink
Pavlova rose,
soft, strong, and delicate.
My turmoil I must confess:
an unresolvable umbilical tale,
a tinny tube; your cannula
holds us together
as we search for virgin patches of skin.
Insulin pumps
my heart out.
Through its arteries,
hope drains.
My soul aches and aches
like a sprung watering can.
Why must we lug
this undesired bag?
I should have known
there is no rose without thorns.

Palliative pleasure

Oh God! May I be alive when I die.
—Winnicott

A fine line of first wrinkles
hides a denser marrow, a fibrotic scar,

CONTACT Pilar Rojas Gaviria  projasgaviria@uc.cl  School of Business, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Av. Vicuña Mackenna, Macul, Santiago 4860, Chile

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making my prognosis of the dubious kind.

Dismissed from official protocols,
I improvise an overdose,
combining Pegasys
with a classic Bordeaux Saint-Émilion.

While the liquids vagabond through my veins,
I dance in bliss,
dropping still,
dreamy and naïve—
perhaps a temporary relief?

When your hands tie up my broken body,
I make a last attempt to mesmerize your ears.
Then, in the depths of your curly hair,
my hips explode
with volcanic fervor,
and we make love
until the last platelet drops.

Dans mon lit

A bitter taste assaults—
an inscrutable feeling:
perfidious, distorted,
unconscious, confused.
Immobile, I partake
in this evil genius's game,
made in Italy
and suspiciously branded
Illusione.

He wraps me up,
full of hope,
in Egyptian cotton.
While the world
still pretends to be working,
I breathe my last:
Bruno Jovanovic's
Dans Mon Lit.

Branded consumer artifacts

Anna Pavlova (bush rose): Bred by Peter Beales in 1981, the Pavlova rose pays tribute to the famous Russian dancer Anna Pavlova, born in 1881.

Pegasys (peginterferon alfa-2a): This is a registered trademark of Hoffmann-La Roche Inc. Interferon is a protein that reinforces the body's immune system to help fight infections and severe diseases.

Bordeaux Saint-Émilion: Saint-Émilion is a winemaking appellation specific to the Bordeaux region of France.

Illusione: The Illusione collection is one of the most popular classic collections of bed linens by Frette, a fine Italian luxury producer of linens and home furnishings since 1860.

Dans Mon Lit: A bed-linen spray created by Bruno Jovanovic, the Dans Mon Lit fragrance is a combination of half Turkish rose essence and half Rose Water Essential.

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Notes on contributor

Pilar Rojas Gaviria is Assistant Professor of Marketing at Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile. Her work focuses on understanding the role of consumption in the construction of multicultural collective identities and solidarities. She draws on philosophical theories, poetry, and research on consumer behavior. She has published her work in *Journal of Business Research*, *International Marketing Research*, and the *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*.

ORCID

Pilar Rojas Gaviria  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-6036-6448>