

Los Cuernos

Minutes before going down to the village school for our boy
my wife tells me the latest gossip: the father of one
classmate and the mother of another are involved
in a private affair that has abruptly gone public.

I don't know how many free-loving downsizers live here now
but they can't be more than a hundred.
The locals make up what's left of the thousand souls
who sleep within range of the old church bells,
either together or alone.

Immediately I hear the news I think of the pain of tearing
anything apart, and before I lift the car keys off the kitchen table
I kiss my wife on the cheek. But
she says, "You wouldn't do it, would you,
ponerme los cuernos así?"

I don't know what to say to that but I do remember
as I walk out the door that nothing is born of nothing,
whereas heat and energy are always expended
in every transaction.

The earth keeps shifting beneath our feet and there is always
some loss in the translation from one language to another,
whether that language be of bodies or minds.

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