

BUFEO COLORADO

Unlike the werewolf, the Amazon's ruddy dolphin-
man becomes human when the moon grows full;
once ashore, he dons a Panama hat to cover his
bald pate's blow hole.

Pacaya river names *Alfaro*
broken into *Amazon* broken
into pencil lead tributaries

the *Orinoco* mission to find
boto a total mess Mateus
guessed *tonight I will write off my quest*
confessed *I am a failed animal*
scientist
his blue-black curls lunar-
frosted as he wandered shirt open

off the town's esplanade, back licked
by shadows chanting
Anthony de
Santos, John, e Peter.

Mateus watched light
shards slice tannin-stained waters. He knelt,
a pink wisp split the surface.

My face? *Swallowed* he thought.

His fingertips edged
light inch deep ten fractured stubs pumping.

A voice from the river caught
on the ribbed fronds above him.

Yemaya he prayed *Yemaya* he
raved tearing a page
from his notebook
casting it on the waves.

He turned away, caught

a glimpse of white
straw, a brim splintered through vines,
followed the Panama to bonfires.

An accordion tightened its whine.

Hips *dançar!* ground hips. Mateus's
blue sought out dark
eyes under white brim

but when asked *Who are you?* Bufeo
simply bobbed his brim.
Only recently come ashore, he did not know

the language of men, his pupils reflecting moon
and fire like wind
off a hurricane-churned sea.

While Mateus made love to Bufeo that night
the brim stayed.

Bufeo woke sweat-soaked noticed pale
light at the window felt his hat
slowly lift.

Eyes darted
to the clock.

A finger rimmed the exposed blow-hole.

Bufeo did not run could
say nothing but wait for sleep to take,
to slip out from his arms
slink down to the river, Mateus

left to dream of pink ripple
black cleft.

Amazon glimmered red. Bufeo
swam, blood close under skin, Mateus

panting in time to see *boto* hump
break breath hole closed open

closed again.

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