

**FANI PAPAGEORGIU**

**The Jaguar's Wife**

A girl marries a jaguar  
so that she can get all the meat she wants.  
No need to make a song and dance of it, she says to her family.

The jaguar comes to live with the Indians.  
For a time the girl's family becomes friendly with the new couple.  
As long as you know how to walk into a room properly, that is all  
that matters,  
the father tells his daughter.

Soon a grandmother feels mistrust.  
Run your kitchen like a ship, she tells her granddaughter,  
then resorts to witchcraft and kills her.

The family becomes very frightened of the jaguar,  
expecting him to take revenge.

You will remember me in years to come, says the jaguar  
and goes off incensed by murder.  
About hypothermia they say,  
You're not dead until you're warm and dead.

The mind goes first.  
Then you can't fill the gap.  
Don't be tractable, Lévi-Strauss says. Be reckless.  
The sound of roaring comes from farther and farther away—