Contents

The River Spirits

I “Think of me as a rat” 3
II “In the blue and sleeping hours” 4
III “By few accounts it was a jewelled lake that spring” 5
IV “Once when the Italian girl” 6
V “So much snow falling suddenly” 7
VI “That dude named Homer Brown” 8
VII “Crude” 10
VIII “Yes the bus will take you to Hazelwood” 11
IX “A lightning storm” 13
X “She denied it to everyone” 14
XI “Warm winter” 15
XII “Last or next or first” 17
XIII “TUKAJ POCIVA” 18
XIV “One rat under the snow sleeps invisible” 23

The Neck of the Air

A Rhyme for Halloween 27
Long Distance 28
A Little Thing 29
When the Light Turned Red 30
U-turn 32
Doña Josefina Counsels Doña Concepción Before Entering Sears 33
How Grammar School Is Changing 34
Once When I Was in the Eighth Grade 35
Dorothy, Dear 36
A City Prophet Talks to God on the 56C to Hazelwood 37
Beyond Kigali 38
The Miniaturist  39
The Hours of Our Dreaming  40
Inquiries  41
The Yellow Borges: An Answer to a Question  42
Make-up  43
The Story of Tapioca  44
How We Learn How Small Our Voice Is  45
Omens in a Small Town  46
Where Were You?  47
Ohiopyle Unrhymed  48

The Other World

Un poema de poca sangre  51
A Poem of Little Blood  52
To the Dead Farmer  53
The Straightest Branches  54
The Easter Revolt Painted on a Tablespoon  55
The Tower in the Clouds  56
At Twilight on the Road to Sogamoso  57
The Archivist of Shadows  58
In Nariño Nakopemda Balahika Sings, Dances, and Answers
the Many Questions of Her Cinnamon Daughter  59
I Sing on the Day of the Deceased  61
Homage to My Emerald Body  63
Homenaje a mi cuerpo de esmeralda  64

Acknowledgments  65