



“I wrote the first story when I was trying to figure out my MA project. It came to me as a mystical coincidence. I was sitting at my desk in school, working, when suddenly a professor my partner had told me about opened the door and came in a rush. He seemed to be looking for someone. I asked him if he needed something but he only responded by giving me two quail eggs...”

It was the first time I took the step to talk to Alejandra Aguilar Caballero, and I didn't want to impose on her with my conversation—since she looked busy and a bit strict/reserved—so I gave her the two boiled quail eggs, that I intended giving to her partner anyhow. I wanted to break the ice between us. And apparently it did, since the event hatched 30 childhood stories (eventually).

Of course, there was no prediction for what had just happened. But the spirit of absurd theatre—of an act that was conceived as a performance, using the situational contingencies as a material—lent itself outcomes largely unpredicted by me, since AAC had previous experience from her childhood, involving quail eggs, so I drew a bunny. I found ‘rabbit’ in the text some pages later.

Through her, I discovered the term ‘marvellous real’ which is the direct translation of *magical realism* in Spanish. I will use this denominator from now on, because it more accurately renders what it is about. The title of her thesis is *You set the scene* (2021). In her writing, it corresponds to a specific artistic choice: to *fictionalise* herself in *response* to the problem of *remembrance*.

That is, 1) a response to the problem of emulation, substitution and erasure that comes with remembering (if reduced to that gesture); but that is somehow compensated by 2) fictionalising the self. A micro-event in the development of the human ego: or, the transformation of desire into consciousness. The acts of our ego expanding to the the larger self when remembering.

We can indulge in memories, or *alternatively* grow. And the muffled conversations between the self and ego are not secret, but rather tacit. The truth is that when reading her thesis I had completely forgotten about the eggs (and had a good laugh...). But I had decided to read her thesis on bike-tour, where I usually take a rest and some coffee at *Sørkedalen—Landhandel & kafé*.

I regularly do this sort of *staging* with readings of some importance, and the selection of this café was such a *situational* staging. I had forgotten about the eggs. Yet, on the outside of the establishment this text was foiled unto the vitrine: “The eggs everyone are talking about... you find them here.” This was not calculated on my part: but did I still—somehow—remember? Who knows?

There are similar turns in AAC's thesis: “The further away we are in the present from a past event, the more we alter it and open up the possibility for fiction to exist.” During the C19 *lockdown* she was confined in her home, while working on drawn and colour printed paper-houses that either had come from her writing, or *popped* out from her readings. Illusions *prefigured* by fiction.

And so, no longer illusion but *images*. Some of them contained, others moving. Prefiguring illusion by fiction—and so conjuring the image as an *event*: and so, in the genealogy of the *image* happening. When prefigured by a narrative the optical illusion testifies to the reality of the image. The kind of meta-boils at the edge of crisis hallmarking the *marvellous real*. A [metalepsis](#).