



A red line.

artist: Héctor Martínez.
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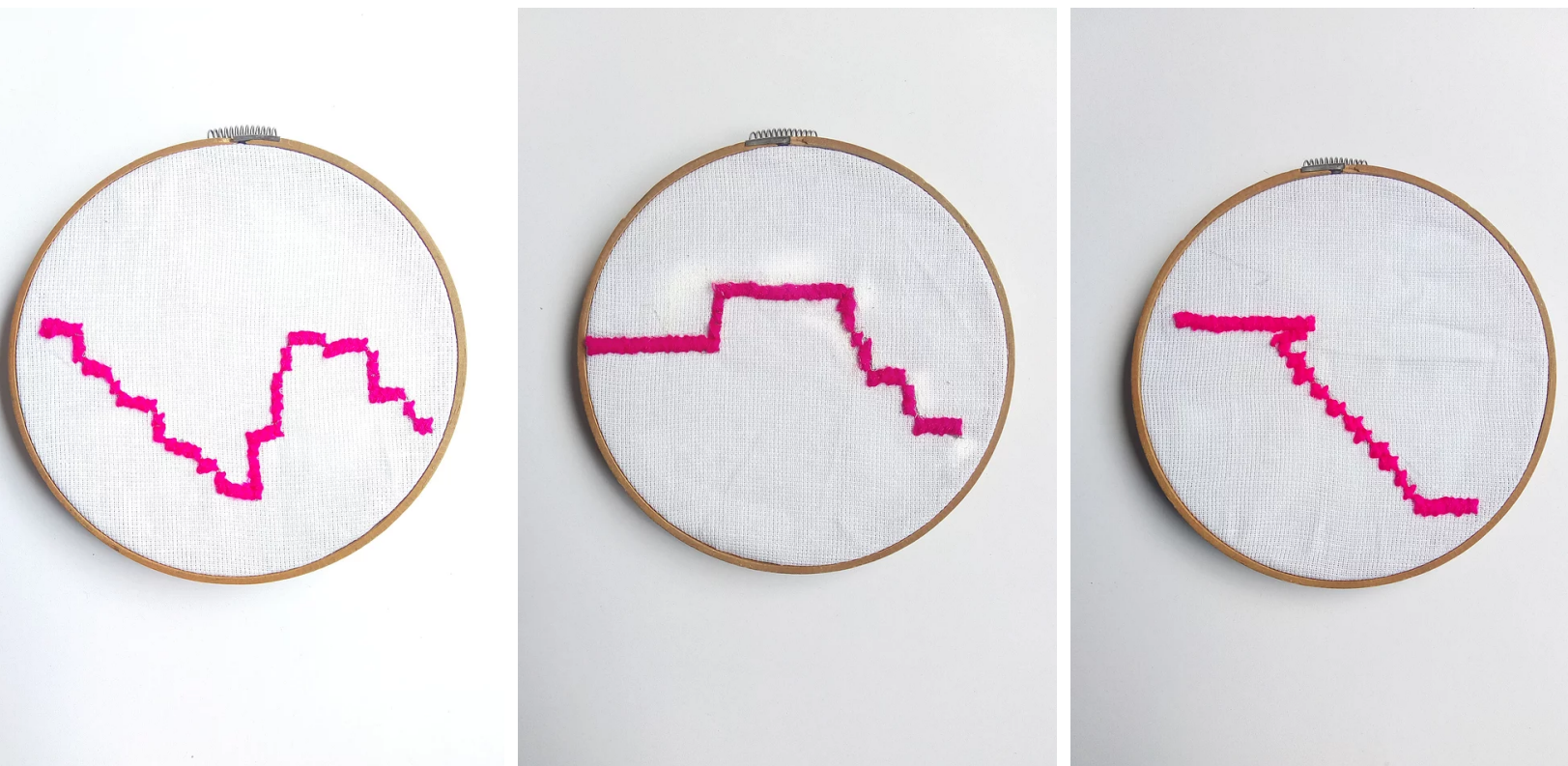
By: Mirja Chávez.
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*" When crossing the white threshold, where the swallows rested every spring,
after 11 hours of travel, I wanted to hear your voice."*



All my life I've been far away from you, I know it's normal for you, and now I reaffirm that we'll have a line that separates us. I'm here, you're there; I'm in my life, and you're in yours; today I try to cross the line and get to you, but it's too late. We only met on certain days, and at specific times: your birthday, Christmas, New Year, your partner's birthday; other times on Easter and hot summer evenings. Today I realize that our lives are based on lines, on red lines like blood that tells us what can be done and what can't, because once you cross them, you can no longer turn back. The lines limit us in all respects.

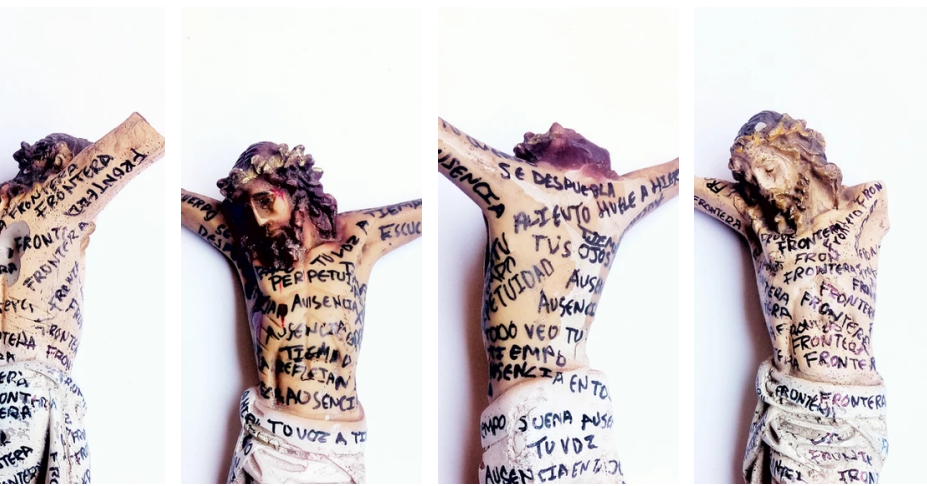
The heart with each pulse draws a line, a line that goes up and down on a monitor. It draws the continuity of life and your line stopped drawing itself. Red lines are limited by specific spaces and moments, as in an embroidery ring where once you reach the limit you can no longer go beyond. I know it should be a comfort to know that you survived a lethal cancer 20 years ago. I remember that in the operation (as I was told) they opened you, from the chest to the womb, they took out much more than they expected and I really wanted to see you, cross the line and hug you, but I told myself that was an act of selfishness from me. After a while, you marked that line more. Could it be that it was the ideal opportunity to cut the thread of our union?



It's not the first time that I enter this house, it feels different as if I enter a dream, but I know that it is not, I know that this is a new reality and I feel as if I were diving for the first time in an uncomfortable and familiar place. Through the window I see your Christmas tree, the one that saved you a lot of work because it already has the Christmas lights integrated and tinkle to the rhythm of a song that you always wanted. You always waited for me to decorate that tree, to put the decorations in its places but today they're already on. Reminding me things run their course.

The Christmas tree not long ago ceased being magical, the wonders of growing, the joy I felt fades away. Now, Christmas, my Christmas, is just another holiday. The custom was to go back to the city to meet my parents and then to meet you. We are now a few... What am I supposed to do if you're not even here anymore?

When crossing the white threshold, where the swallows rested every spring, after 11 hours of travel, I wanted to hear your voice but I could only settle for: "Welcome m'hija!" I ask my mom at what time the others arrive, I check every corner of the room to see if, by any chance, you're hiding and it was just another one of your tricks. I check all the rooms in search of the others, but I know I'm only looking for you. I find my grandfather, I hug him, I take a seat with him and we contemplate the trees in the garden.



In a way, this whole situation reminds me of the work of Hector Martinez; his Christ with words scattered throughout his body, those words that fail to be expressed and remain inscribed with pain; but above all it reminds me of your absence the work the artist has in reference to a box containing tamal leaves. If you look closely, you can see some burnt letters, but not beyond; you are a reminiscence. I'm slightly recognizing what I think should be. Today your voice is with me, but I don't know how much longer it will stay in my memory, in fact, I'm not sure your voice is really your voice. Today I don't know what your height is or where my head reached as I hugged you, but I still cling to what I imagine is your voice. The parts of the burnt



leaves are like your absent body, you turned into flames and I was very angry at the time but I no longer know how to stop the flames; to be able to remember you as you are, or rather, as you were. We've been told today that we're having Christmas dinner together, I hope I can find something about you because you're about to turn to ashes.



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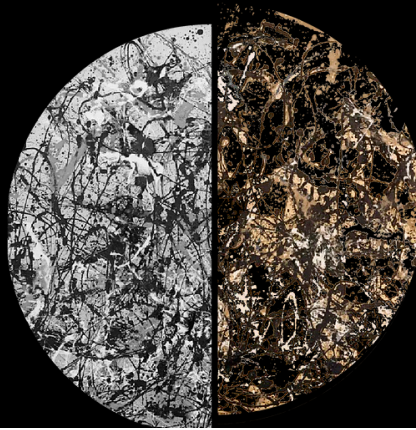
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