

Krešimir Bagić

A Donkey then a Star

Blaž told two stories. About donkey then a star.

The first story, that about a donkey: there was a donkey walked along the meadow, looking around, laughing and singing, and all the animals followed him, but having lowered his eyes he noticed a screw was missing from his sneaker, so he grew very sad and cried, cried, and cried ...

The second story, that about a star: once upon a time there was a star that fell into the fire, hurt itself and got ill, so it went to a doctor, told him what ailed it and turned off the lamp on his desk, which made the doctor angry and refuse to treat the star ...

Blaž told two stories. About a donkey then a star. And he went to bed. His parents looked at each other lovingly and turned on the TV.

Tr. by Mario Suško

A Journey into Lightness

the air steals its lightness from my eyes
it's all right we are friends
whistling we conquer space
and return it to its beginning

we already taught a bird to be a holiday
to sleep while flying so we can feel
its feathers just like we do the leaves
in the wind
like we do redness in a fever

my breath goes back to an old mountain well
we drink ourselves there darkly
we embrace each other in the depth
we resemble each other like a drop and a thought
in the desert where no one could be an oasis

the air devastated my eyes
and now watches its mountain spring
become its body
itself become suddenly clear and cold
plain as an arrow shot at the sun

in return I stole its lightness
the earth lost its weight
words lost their weight
the space turned into a round dot

first I say "bird"
then the bird says "I"
later on everything becomes possible

later on I-bird
can begin everything
everything that is not heavy

Tr. by Mario Suško

The Crystal

I watch a crystal on this dear moss-grown
face. Healthy green color inhabits my look
and veins. Long live the sky without clouds
and threatening smiles, I think, repeating
that piously and softly like a prayer.

The crystal, while I watch, goes from green
to blue, red, white ... And the face? It vanishes,
sinks into a shadow, its features melt, go back
to childhood. I come closer, step back, squint.
I draw a rainbow in the dust no child runs under.
The sky is cloudless, without threatening smiles.

An impossible space grows impossibly fast.
No eyes of mine in the mirror any more, or the nose,
the hands, left eyebrow ... Everything has become poetry.

- A flower slipped off my shoulder and fell into the water,
a traveler I keep admiring consoles me.
- Man, the sky blossomed up like April, I say,
and you talk about a shoulder you, in fact, do not have.

At the end the dust also inhabits the crystal
the forest we got lost in
never to return,
never to get separated again.
Is it possible for anyone to endure that?

Tr. by Mario Suško

In a Twilight Suburb

I was listening to fierce sad stories
In a twilight suburb, stories
Drowned in tics and alcohol.
While the faces of those present
Were swallowed by tobacco smoke
They would show me the door,
Toss me into the street,
From the mountain into a cave,
Promise warm lodging, pleasures,
Insult me, steal my breath away.

How do you get out of your neighbour's cupboard?
Who lost their innocence after a pasty?
How do you earn one hundred thousand nothings?
Where is Božo?
A life for the General!?

I was listening, I say, to fierce sad stories
In a twilight suburb, stories
Drowned in tics and alcohol.
Years later, the tramp's words
And the policeman's words, love scenes
And scenes of violence settled
In the rose of the evening
Which feeds me,
Which I cannot escape.

How do you get out of your neighbour's cupboard?
Who lost their innocence after a pasty?
How do you earn one hundred thousand nothings?
Where is Božo?
A life for the General!?

Well, I have only one story now
Which has overtaken me entirely.
No longer can I pluck the petals, forget the face of the man
Giving a speech outside the inn windows.
Each night the rose repeats to me:
This world is a spider's web
Into which you weave yourself
As soon as you stop fearing the spider.
Although it existed before you,
You think you were the one that began to weave it.

Yes. I listened long to fierce sad stories
In a twilight suburb, stories
Drowned in tics and alcohol.
Now they are my horizon and my border.
And native land, which I bear with me
Into the heart of the city like an identity card.

If anyone there asks me who I am
I shall tell him without hesitation

How to get out of your neighbour's cupboard
Who lost their innocence after a pasty
How to earn one hundred thousand nothings
Where Božo is...

Tr. by Kim Burton

Metal's perfidious song

Man snaps like a reed in the
scrape of a rusty swing.
While the tube closes into its dark
a child gives him a delighted wave.
Not knowing when to stop,
not hearing the perfidious song of metal,
not seeing the lamp, the axe,
the arm grown to a staff.

The water nourishes the reed and smoothes it,
the water from which the glassy
surface of memory grows.
The swing scrapes on one side,
on the other the reed squeals,
in the mud from which there's no escape,
in a gurgle, in a clank, in a slap,
in a flight that fades before the wings.

The man closes the window, draws the curtains,
plugs his ears, starts to sing.
But his vocal cords let him down,
redouble the swing's scraping,
the perfidious song of metal,
fade to black the lamp, sand and sky.
When speechlessness rules space,
the universe thunders without:
“Look at me, daddy!”

Tr. by Kim Burton