



Two surrealist poets from Belgrade

translated by Ivana Maksić

DUŠAN MATIĆ

BEFORE THE STORM

Let the night be again as you like it
I don't know anything anymore
I don't understand anything
Except for the harsh and resinous night rising
Night and night and the night again.

Instead of gold and evil and good and the wall of despair
Which has no end and against which I hit my head repeatedly
One faceless fascination one soundless reason
For the long night rising
Sight and view funny and mixed forever.

Except for the blood flowing between every pain and every-
body's pain
Not a sinker could plumb their depths.

Forget your memory forget your oblivion
Like a moony traveler who forgets his bundle at some unknown
station
A sore bridge with wounds of the world spreads over these
landslides
Over that horror and mud
Where the habit of light fractures in a teardrop unredeemed.

There on the lawn of that bottomless chill I watch and sleep
Fragile and murky and alone
My brashness doesn't help me at all.

SOLITUDE

You cannot describe sorrow.
It is a flood which destroys everything on its way
smashing houses,
digging dikes,
rolling hills.
Man is but a beaten dog which no one needs.
I hate sorrow.
Sorrow cannot be expressed.
It is a fire smoldering for years
and then erupting,
forests are burning,
cities being swept away.
A man is but a corpse of the universe which no one
can recognise.
I hate sorrow.
That you cannot judge.
It is always a rock round a drowning man's neck
tied forever.
Peace is only at the bottom
that cannot be measured.
A man – a flame
returns into a stone.
I hate sorrow.

THERE ARE NIGHTS

There are nights which can't be forgotten.
There are nights which are waste like glaciers.
There are nights which are dead like lakes.

There are nights bitter like memories.
There are nights which are incurable.
there are nights which are like flattened grass after great storms.

There are nights when dead delights I can never bury.
There are nights which never stop neighing in front of threshold
.
There are nights which are like a knife stabbed to the bottom of
the heart.

There are nights voiceless like a conviction.
There are nights when I'm a wreck.
There are nights when nobody knows what shall we do with
minutes.

There are nights when we are unreal like apparitions.
There are nights which last for years.
There are nights which travel nowhere.

There are nights slaughtered like lambs.
There are nights like a smell of rotten hyacinths.
There are nights which I gave you with no return.

There are nights which I gave you with no return.
There are nights awkward like the hands of a sick man.
There are nights that are tame like somebody loving.

There are nights sweet like delusion, like life itself.
There are nights as tired as a woman who gave herself in.
There are nights like letters which didn't reach anybody.

There are nights which darkness nor star, nor lamp
can ever deny.
There are nights like a voyager on a sinking ship.
There are nights impatient like an insult, like tears.

There are nights which are the prisoner's window.
There are nights blunt like why? where from? where to?
There are nights fragile like a branch on which we stand.

There are nights like a song unspoken.
There are nights when crazy horses wait.
There are nights when crazy horses wait the guest to come out-
side
in vain.

There are nights which are... there are nights...
There are nights which I watch every single night.
There are nights which are finally already a dawn.



OSKAR DAVIČO

LOVE

8.

I am alone.

Your departure has plucked out from my root
the heart of the cricket singing to me and you.

I am alone.

Under my skin there is a sleepy silence
the dream of your steps, my loved one.

In my dream I hear these steps across the sand,
the sand
faithful as a dog,
it is a blurry mortal pace
over the raucous drum.

I am alone.

After so much sense, after so many kisses
flaming anchors dropped in our flesh.

I am alone.

Your hand does not ruffle my hair ... no,
I'm not trembling now
while love is crying, around me, like a hangman's noose.

I'm aware of these steps across the sand,
the sand
faithful as a dog,
it is a blurry mortal pace
over the raucous drum.

I am alone.

The night reveals a new shell in my eye, I can see all dried stars.

A bat of sad darkness falls on me, I cry.

I am alone.

Hands from the walls sprout, smiles to me flies; I rush
to the window. Downstairs, my friends are awaiting. In vain
their whistling tonight.

In vain, in vain.

I am so alone tonight.

I am so mad tonight,
sick without love.

I am so alone tonight.

I am so ashamed tonight,

In vain, tonight, in vain.

THE COAST I HAD KNOWN BEFORE MYSELF

2.

How can I forget you
when the scar is healing
not being closed before the day
in a sharp whizzing above the prey
open as the world
without knocking;

when one wound caused by another
whirls the womb of the victim
by its own whirled womb;
when even the multiplication table
is a wild feeling in two;

when the impatience
growing out of it
unlocks obscurities
of future pleasures
with a displeasure in their root.

How can I forget you
when even in the crushed stone of blood,
two sniffing piths
are destroying each other
by acidic sweaty embraces;

when even in the live park of light
permeated by the steps of misunderstanding
edged in black,
the fruit trees planted last summer

grow together with their shadows

while an elastic spoon
stirrs in an edgeless cup
rivers sweetened
with an insoluble
cube of despair.

How can I forget you
when even my face turned to ashes
is being swept by a stony sponge
of one timeless wall
and behind it, enclosed,

my voices, from all sides
attack me only from behind
opening the windows for
mutual silences
on everything that can exist for round

fiery balls
and everything in them; when the invisible nocturnal sun
articulates us brought closer and we do not articulate it,
remaining lonely and too much
unseen.

A SNAPSHOT OF THE BIOGRAPHICAL LANDSCAPE

I have some friends who do not look like me.
But my girlfriend blood, my boyfriend mind,
my sister silence, my brother pain,
my father anger, mother – weeping,
my grandma – magpie, my grandpa – sword

they all have the same appearance and voice
like my friend typhoon, my halter rain,
my horror grass, my fear light
my end – how many scattered leaves
on the road with no personal traits;

they have the same posture – how many nails
thrust into one's eyes; and the same ears –
how many faltered feelings;
how many negative thoughts
have the same earthquake. So much

we do not look alike.

A SNAPSHOT OF THE LANDSCAPE OF UNCERTAINTY

1.

If I close my eyes before the far gone day,
that question is you. Then I see:
somebody is approaching you, but you're not passing by.
Is that already me
not remembering?

2.

... knowing two ancestors: one terrifies at night, the other
dies in daylight.
There is one embrace. It knows
a string of small panthers biting their flesh crushing their
bones tumbling down to the bottom of pleasure.
There is one pain. It knows
one breath of pulled out hair bitten teeth scratched
eyes, jointed fingers.
There is but one memory.

ABOVE THE MURDERED WOMAN'S HEART

The city has lost all its people, their names,
their voices
their sun, their shadows, their night. . .
In front of the city gates fields of rye are
waving
above the murdered woman's heart.

One girl's name has flown away, the smile; the breath
is no longer lingering on those lips, still plump and red. . .
No one can hear the fear from the wound
spattering blood
over the girl's colourful dress.

A STRANGER

She is moving above our river
strangely uninvited.
She is browsing above our
pasture
black and panting.

She's circling above our village
unseen unheard.
She's flying like a white
arrow
following the road through.

While nights are falling dead
with no colour, with no smell.
Why do the dogs whimper?
What do they know?
Why are they afraid?

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