



DIOGEN traži čovjeka
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DIOGEN is seeking for human being



Jüri Talvet

BELIEVE WHAT SIGNS YOU LIKE

No matter that your ancestors
spoke another tongue,
a tongue that now no one knows.
A shield wrought with words
defends only during peacetime.
In wartime, the time of love,
you spoke to me in the oldest tongue,
darker than your dark hair,
deeper than the stammering words
of your ancestors, more alive
than the blood of your red lips,
defying with your tongue
the dividing lines of the word,
fearlessly smuggling onto my tongue
a taste greener than grass,
more like the sea
than the sea itself.

FROM SANTIAGO'S ROAD

III

(*A dream of Europe*)

In the end, our task is to multiply the blue sky,
the peaceful dream of sunrise,
to take the grey rag from the eyes,
to be a lake that washes its eyes, a forest that readies
its green bed, not to fear being an ocean that expands,
a well that explains.

The republic of course only imitates liberty:
every state is a mark of the stamp, every president
a cartoon parrot.

In every Republic one learns anew to escape
the clever corridors the great architect designed,
while into the expanding cracks power sucks
parrots and lions,
chiggers and men.

Above all, fear the cruel, mad sectarian.

Better be a pagan barbar, till the point of the toe.

Better a mad Roman, until Christ.

In everything the fear of love is guilty.
Too capriciously screamed the apple, but justly
the sink moaned under the burden of nightly ablutions.
We do not sow culture here,
it grows by itself and breeds us.
While presidential beaks clap shut
and the West wails in labor, pregnant with joys
it cannot deliver,
invisibly Europe sends out shoots of balance
always green near the heart.

(Translated by H. L. Hix; *Estonian Elegy. Selected Poems*. Toronto: Guernica, 2008)

TRAINS

1.

To the train! To the train!, a cherished
colleague called. Everyone is
aboard already: diligent compatriots,
ministers, poets,
the beauty of humankind
on the Paris-New York Express!
Bon voyage, then. Once my Latvian
great-grandmother, who never in her life
got angry, told my mother,
who sat in her lap
amid the world war's smoking ruins,
when the morning whistle from the station
pierced Mõisaküla's bone and flesh:
That horse never waits.

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**AT A PUB CALLED “BLOND LIVES HERE” YOU SEE BEHIND THE BAR
INSTEAD OF MARILYN MONROE’S LOW-CUT NECKLINE THE SEAWEED-
EYES OF A DARK SLENDER GIRL**

A small yellow leaf has followed, floated down off your jacket,
landed quietly beside the coffee cup. You could pretend
to be in Paris, but really your Europe is nowhere else than here,
especially now that after summer’s tumult only the murmur
in your native tongue of the falling leaves of lime and maple remains,
under your feet acorn crowns crackle, the darker brown of chestnuts,
the red of woodbine staining the side of the house you whitewashed in summer.
You gather antonovkas, their thick peels like wax,
let somebody claim that this one looks like wax fruit from a museum,
let him keep his thought to himself, let him live more and preach less.
A hard apple dropped down on your head — before you yourself could
start to preach. Gold, red, brown. Along the coast of Tahkuranna
a golden line runs, the Tihemetsa park like a Japanese garden,
the wind’s claws tear at the water of a fountain, boldly rip to shreds
the gray carpet of the sky, but the bay stays more peaceful than
Seneca’s Mediterranean heart, knowing that a few months remain, before
a skin made of ice defends its heart against age, a few months remain
until you run shouting for joy toward spring swings, despite time.

IT FLIES TO THE HIVE

Swallows flit
from the corner,
golden heart-splinters.
You are one of them,
sent alone to the market
for the first time,
now returning home:
running-running,
smiling-smiling,
merrily-merrily,
with your braids aglow,
your heart beating,
in your bag a heavy loaf
of good Pärnu rye bread.

(Translated by H. L. Hix; *Of Snow, of Soul. Poems*. Toronto: Guernica, 2010)

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