

V E R S O P O
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T W E N T Y T W E N T Y - O N E

The Trapeze Heart
Сэрца на трапецыі

Volha Haryejeva / Вольга Гапеева

Translated from Belarusian and German by Annie Rutherford

A R M E N I
A N B E L
A R U S I A
N G R E E K
S L O V A K

VERSOPOLIS TWO

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VERSOPOLIS
is a unique, Europe-wide platform.
It gives emerging European poets
the chance to reach an audience beyond
the boundaries of the language they write in
by translating and publishing their poems
and inviting them to perform at festivals.



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VOLHA HAPEYEVA is an award-winning Belarusian poet who also writes prose, drama and occasional books for children. She collaborates with electronic musicians and visual artists to create audio-visual performances. Her work has been translated into more than ten languages, with poems published in countries including the USA, Austria, Germany, Poland, Russia, Georgia, Lithuania, etc.

She is the author of twelve books in Belarusian thus far, including the most recent poetry collections *words that happened to me* (2020), *Black Poppies* (2019), *The Grammar of Snow* (2017) and the novel *Camel-Travel* (2020). Her poetry has appeared in English translation in the collection *In My Garden of Mutants* (Arc Publications, 2021). She has also been translated into German, with a poetry collection *Mutantengarten* (Edition Thanhäuser, 2020) and a novel *Camel-Travel* (Droschl Verlag, 2021).

Volha also translates poetry from English, German, and Japanese. She holds a PhD in linguistics; her research is in the fields of comparative linguistics, philosophy of language, sociology of the body, and gender issues in culture and literature. She has participated in numerous literary festivals and conferences all over the world and has completed residencies in countries including Germany, Switzerland, Austria and Latvia. She is a member of the Belarusian PEN Centre.

www.hapeyeva.org

ANNIE RUTHERFORD champions poetry and translated literature through her work at StAnza, Scotland's international poetry festival, and as a writer and translator. *Hydra's Heads*, her translation of the selected poems of Swiss/German poet Nora Gomringer, appeared in 2018 with Burning Eye Books. 2021 sees the publication of her translations of Volha Hapeyeva's poetry, *In My Garden of Mutants* (Arc Publications), and Isabel Bogdan's novel *The Peacock* (V&Q Books). She is currently working on translations of Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, Maren Kames and Kinga Toth.

у некаторых людзей
сэрцы знаходзяцца так высока
што даводзіцца браць лесвіцу
каб туды дабрацца
некаторыяносяць сэрцы свае на рукаве
а іншыя дык і зусім хаваюць у пятках
здараецца сэрца пераварочваецца ў целе, скочыць і абрываецца
нібы акрабат на трапецыі
тады самы час выклікаць хуткую дапамогу
каб яго яшчэ можна было б камусьці адаць

some people
carry their hearts so high
that you have to climb a ladder
to reach them
some people wear their hearts on their sleeve
while in others the heart sinks down to their shoes to hide
sometimes it happens that the heart flips over in the body, skips
and plunges
like an acrobat from a trapeze
and then it's high time to call an ambulance
so that the heart can still be given to somebody else

нехта паліць аркушы з вершамі
на мансардзе сусвету

можа ў знак пратэсту
што птушкі пачалі забывацца на радкі сваіх песень
устаўляючы раз параз дрыжачыя гукі дротаў
удаючы рытм грукату цягнікоў
а можа так хутчэй дасягае сваіх адрасатаў
маўчанне
ў якім схаваныя сэнсы ўсіх слоўнікаў свету
і нават больш

такі бязважкі
такі шматзначны
попельны снег
за вакном

яму спатрэбіцца менш за хвіліну
мне ж вечнасць

someone is burning pages of poems
in the universe's attic

perhaps as a sign of protest
because the birds keep forgetting the lines of their songs
now and then inserting the quivering of wires
or mimicking the rhythm of rattling trains
or maybe this is the fastest way for silence to reach its recipients
silence
in which the meanings of all the dictionaries in the world are hidden
and so many others

so weightless
so meaningful
this ashy snow
outside the window

it will take it less than a minute
but for me it will take an eternity

Agathe va à la gare
elle a mal à la tête
але навошта яна туды ідзе
дагэтуль думаю пра яе

можа таму што Paul ist faul
а можа таму што Peter ist fleißig
цікава кім працуюць яны цяпер і ці
зрабіла Пэтэра шчаслівым яго стараннасць

можа el señor López ведае адказ
ён часта esta en casa y escucha la radio

напэўна спадзяецца што fru Olsen перадаць яму прывітанне
тая самая што leser gjerne de franske motejournaler

дзе заўсёды марыла працаваць Monika
якая носи płaszcz matki
не ўпэўненая навошта
як напамін пра маці ці не мае грошай на новы

людзі
жыццё якіх змяшчаецца ў адным сказе
сказы
якія мы вучым напамяць
памяць пра ўспаміны якіх не было
дзе ўтульна і проста
як у жыцці з падручніка па замежнай мове

але хто гаспадар таго чоўна

Agathe va à la gare
elle a mal à la tête
but why is she going?
I still think about her

perhaps because Paul ist faul
or perhaps because Peter ist fleißig
I wonder what they do now and whether
all Peter's hard work has made him happy

perhaps el señor López would know
he often esta en casa y escucha la radio

probably hoping for a message from fru Olsen
who leser gjerne de franske motejournaler

where Monika always dreamt of working
Monika носи płaszcz matki
I'm not quite sure why
to remember her mother by or because she can't afford a new one

people
whose lives fit into a single sentence
sentences
we memorise
memorising memories which never happened
where everything is cosy and simple
like someone's life in a foreign language textbook

but to whom does the boat belong?

маленькі поні катае маленькіх дзяцей
за грошы
што плацяць бацькі ягонаму гаспадару
але іх ўсё адно не хапае
каб кожны дзень есьці салодкую моркву
таму на вячэру сёньня
маленькі поні будзе есьці сухую траву

я не падобна да поні і да маленькіх дзяцей не
падобна
можа я морква
а можа трава
якую ты перажоўваеш ужо каторы год

быў час калі я ня ўмела чытаць
і гэта рабіла мама
тады ў кніжцы было напісана
што
маленькі поні катае маленькіх дзяцей
проста так

a little pony carries little children
for money
which their parents pay the owner
but still it's never enough
to eat sweet carrots every day
and so for tea tonight the little pony
will be eating dry grass

I'm not like a pony
not much like the wee kids
could be I'm a carrot
or that grass
which you've now been chewing on for years

there was a time
when I couldn't read
and so my mum read for me
and then it was written in the book
that the little pony carries little children
for free

um das richtige wort zu finden
muss man in den wald gehen
und es wie eine begeisterte pilzjägerin suchen
stundenlang den boden studieren
vielleicht auch um hilfe beim waldgeist bitten

wären wörter blumen
wäre es einfacher
dann gingen wir in den botanischen garten
um ihre schönheit zu geniessen
und würden seltene exemplare tauschen

doch die wörter sind wahrscheinlich pilze
sie können sehr giftig sein
aber auch sehr lecker
und niemand weiß ganz genau
woher sie denn kamen

to find the right word
you have to go into the woods
search for it like an enthusiastic mushroom forager
studying the ground for hours
perhaps requesting help from the forest spirit

if words were flowers
it would be easier
then we could go to the botanic gardens
to enjoy their beauty
and would exchange rare specimens

but words are probably mushrooms
they can be poisonous
as well as delicious
and nobody quite knows
just where they came from

калі ты дрэва
а вецер сышоў ад цябе

стаяць нерухома можна стагодзьдзямі

і што табе птушкі зь іх звонкімі песьнямі лета

калі ты
дрэва
ад якога сышоў вецер

as a tree
abandoned by the wind

you might not move for centuries

what do you care for the birds and their resounding songs of summer

when you are
a tree
abandoned by the wind

мастацкая гімнастыка пакідае след
не толькі на целе

цяпер вы з болем на ты
і вусцішна адно калі добра

бо калі добра
незразумела што пераадольваць
з кім спаборнічаць
і каму даводзіць што лепшая

калі добра
вусцішна што так не бывае
бо жыццё — барацьба
бясплатны сыр . . .
і нішто не падае з неба

так праз церні да церняў
не бачачы зораў
калі вось яны над галавою
штоночы

але хіба бывае так проста
і так нявусцішна

rhythmic gymnastics doesn't just leave
marks on your body

now pain knows you personally
and it is only frightening when everything is fine

because when everything is fine
it's unclear what you have to overcome
who to compete with
and who you need to show that you are the best

when everything is fine
it's frightening for this isn't possible
for life's no bed of roses
there's no such thing
as a free lunch — or a windfall

and so struggling through the gutters
you don't see the stars
although they're right there, just above your head
every night

but can it really be that easy
and that unfrightening

бярлог твайго цела адшукаць давялося запозна
быў час прачынацца і ісці прэч з таго лесу
сумны агонь ўядаўся мне пад лапаткі
адхінаў спадзяванні і
рушыў глыбей у вантробы
так пазбаўляў цеплыні каб магла я запомніць
без полымя трэску мушу праз холад замерзнуць
я кідала вогнішчу хруст сваіх костак і
косткі
хутка згаралі пакідаючы пыл і попел
чужынцы вуголлем на мне малявалі розныя гукі
казалі ёсць іншыя якіх ты і не чула
скрыгат па скуры праступаў і белыя плямы
па мне разляталіся матылямі
неразумеўне лісцем буяла на дрэвах
няўтульнасць пускала карэнні і скоўвала рухі
ад сценаў пустых адскоквала рэха і дзіды
у языку застрагалі мне адмаўляючы ў словах
як высветлілася свабода у гэтых шыроках не выжывае
як у шмат якіх іншых гукі чужыя ёй шкодзяць
табе ж заміналі фіранкі і крумкачы ў парку
ці гэта ты прыдумляў сваім страхам такія імёны
даўжыні маіх валасоў усё адно не хапіла
ахаваць
прыцьміць бярог твой ад сонца
быў час прачынацца і вяртаць цябе твайму лесу
мне ж заставацца рыкам у мове мядзведжай

I happened upon the den of your body too late
it was time to wake up and leave that forest
sad fire gnawed beneath my shoulder blades
denying hopes and
moving deeper towards my entrails
depriving me of the heat to let me remember
without the crackling of flames I will freeze
I threw the crunching of bones into the fire and
my bones
burnt fast into ashes and dust
strangers drew different sounds on me with coal
and told me of others that I've never heard
scraping appeared on my skin and white lines
flew along it like moths
incomprehension unfurled on the trees like leaves
unhomeliness took root and hindered my steps
echoes bounced off the empty walls and spears
caught in my tongue denying me words
freedom cannot survive in these latitudes
strange sounds injure it, like in many others
while you were hampered by curtains and crows in the park
or was it you who thought up these names for your fears
the length of my hair still didn't suffice
to protect
to darken your den from the sun
it was time to wake up, to return you to your forest
while I remain a howl in the language of bears

heute fliegen alle langsam
und niedrig
werfen schatten länger als ihr eigenes leben

grüne wanze
eilt sich — sie hat noch zu tun

die junge hummel
legt den gürtel an
schon flugbereit

nur ich sitze unbewegt
in mütze und handschuhen
ende september
fühle mich wie eine außerirdische
auf diesem planeten des gartens

today they are all flying slow
and low
casting shadows longer than their own lives

the green lacewing
hurries — she still has work to do

the young bumblebee
fastens his belt
ready for take-off

I alone sit motionless
in hat and gloves
end of september
and feel like an alien
on this garden planet

самотны цюльпан

самотная птушка

самотная я

ў траве

на дрэве

сярод людзей



a lonely tulip

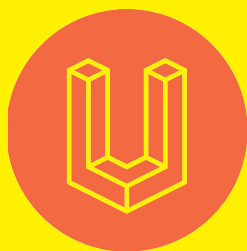
a lonely bird

lonely me

in the grass

on the tree

amongst the crowd



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where
poetry
lives

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