

ABOUT SPRING

the first narcissuses broke from the soil
yellow like a flock of geese
they were covered in the blessed light
the first spring invasion

the spring is already at the ocean
at the dock, at the gray sand
the neighbor put a little support for the winter
beneath the walnut tree

the geese nest in the floodplains
seagulls, cardinals, blackbirds
a caterpillar awakens from sleep
and knows where to take them

storks fly to Ukraine
to their own, to nests that have been warmed
and though it's far for me
I notice them

I know they didn't take pity
they have a natural instinct
to see the earth from a wing
and to always live with that

in this yearly spring
from this shooting and fire of war
the rivers and spring will rise
and the fish will rise along with them

Translated from Ukrainian by Olena Jennings

THE MORNING COOING OF THE DOVES

the doves started cooing today – now
the river will twist like a serpent
bunches of dandelions will yellow
at dawn the doves' song began
at night I didn't dream:
the rain falling fitfully since yesterday

maybe so that I would hear,
how the three-corner roof, a hood of shingles
beat against the rain like a pair of wings
and maybe so that the world of doves
could teach me about the world of lilacs
and theirs and ours will crumble

they told me about the messy
destruction of blossoming – the steady
repetition of this in the cosmos and the fluffy
pussy willows with which the willow beats
when death and life simultaneously become
a city with mound on its back

I thought about the river which, from its surface,
will feed a pair of my doves
The Annunciation – the Passion
Week – then the rising of the body
from the light of the words from a billion stars
about those that our lord shepherd cast out

I thought that night blindness
was responsible for uprooting soil
that waiting for songs and permission
the spring rain would become our inheritance
its roots grown into the thick chornozem
its blossoming growth ruminated by goats

I thought about shepherd's purses and dandelions
about "The Passion" which Bach will complete
starting with the passion of Matthew
pouring the music through the veins of plants
we will listen together with him
to the harmonizing of the tenor and flute

I thought about the doves, but Bach
proscribed the choir and how the flock's
cooing coo-cooing cooing
spread with the blossoming sounds of growth
and that morning I heard the dove's song
and a crooked step in the rainwater

I learned that the doves brought
seven grape seeds like those messengers
of a musical note of "The Passions," the spring flood
and the renewal which awaits us
lady spring passes passes
doves circle flying above her as above a field

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