

## DAUTBEGOVIĆ, Jozefina



**Jozefina Dautbegović**, born in 1948 in Derventa, Bosnia and Herzegovina, graduated in Croatian language and history from the Faculty of Pedagogy, Slavonski Brod, Croatia. Until the beginning of the war in Bosnia she lived and worked in Doboj. She edited *Druga svjetlost* and the arts magazine *Značenja* (Meanings). She writes poetry and prose. Her work has appeared in various anthologies. Her poetry has been translated into English, German, Polish and Swedish. So far she has published five collections of poetry: *The Money-belts*, 1994, *Assumption*, 1985, *From Rome to Capua*, 1990, *Lunch with Pontius Pilate*, 1994, *Pictures from the Floor Mosaic*, 1997.

**Jozefina Dautbegović** je rođena 1948. u Šušnjarima, Derventa, Bosna i Hercegovina. Diplomirala je hrvatski jezik i povijest na Pedagoškoj akademiji u Slavonskom Brodu, Hrvatska. Do početka rata živjela je i radila u Doboju, Bosna i Hercegovina. Bila je urednica biblioteke *Druga svjetlost* i urednica časopisa za kulturu *Značenja*. U vrijeme rata 1992. izbjegla je u Hrvatsku, gdje i sada živi. Piše poeziju i prozu. Zastupljena je domaćim i stranim antologijama. Pjesme su joj prevedene na engleski, njemački, poljski i švedski jezik. Do sada je objavila pet knjiga pjesama: *Čemerike*, 1979, *Uznesenje*, 1985, *Od Rima do Kapue*, 1990, *Ručak s Poncijem*, 1994, *Prizori s podnog mozaika*, 1997.

## JOZEFINA DAUTBEGOVIĆ

### One Fairly Well-meaning God

There exists one fairly well-meaning God  
who after his afternoon rest switches on  
his already linked-up cosmic computer  
and opens a file with my name to remind himself  
what is written with papillary lines in genetic code  
He checks dispositions and other details of DNA  
He is godforgiveme a well-meaning but highly forgetful God  
to fulfill my wish he opens a door for me  
not before I'm inside do I realise it's the wrong one  
but the door is already shut.  
Sometimes he can be hard-of-hearing and fairly obdurate  
letting me pray to him for a long time or knock very hard  
until panic seizes me  
Usually he opens the door when I've lost every hope  
and I stumble into the place  
which doesn't make much of an impression on those around  
We have been together for a long time but are not synchronised  
He can keep me in doubts crush my fingers  
and shut this same door in front of my nose so hard  
that my ears keep ringing for days  
I dare not even think of saying what I often think of him  
But then he does not have a particularly high opinion of me  
He threatens to reprogram me when he finds the time  
His thoughts often wander through the orchards in the Garden of Eden  
I imagine he still suffers me a little  
because no one else can pray to him so ardently  
and because in a special way I show him my gratitude

He is rather old so I fear  
he might while napping accidentally press *delete*  
When I think seriously I shall miss him  
because I know that, like me, he has long been afraid  
of a virus in the cosmic computer.

## Christmas 1998

After finishing with preparations although hungry we did not sit down to eat  
We waited  
We peered out through the window jumped to the door at every sound  
Nothing  
Suspicion appeared  
that He might not have seen our faded window among so much splendour  
and to be honest our dinner is not particularly sumptuous either  
But that should not be the reason  
he is after all God.

## Last Bosnian Winter

Wherever I go I carry it with me as my next illness it has remained in my  
bones  
in my bone marrow  
I am cold in the middle of summer whether in Hvar, Korčula or Opatija  
Winter refuses to leave me it has taken very deep root  
who knows in which part of me lie all its snows which while I wasn't there  
have been falling as in folktales about bewitched regions for seven long years  
and turned into glaciers  
Since then the seasons change as in a film only in front of my eyes  
while inside me the winter lasts  
Surely when I left I must have carried with me the last Bosnian snows  
without knowing that I shall carry them forever  
I say in my bones but who knows where they are hidden  
maybe they inhabit my grey cells and pour down unexpectedly  
when I relax to +30 C and enjoy myself like a lizard on a brick wall

However quiet, I can feel an icy wind blowing from somewhere,  
tugging at my clothes  
I recognise it, it smells of Bosnian snows but just in case  
to convince me, it waves the branches of a palm in front of my nose  
Although I never eat ice-cream every time I eat fruit salad  
my spoon touches a frozen piece of fruit at the bottom of the cup  
My Bosnian winter catches up with me in the middle of summer in the narrow  
streets of seaside towns, escaping from some underground opening  
or from behind the dark altars in romanesque churches  
It's only because of this winter I wear woollen vests on my holidays  
and when I go swimming I always want to put on my socks  
It's because of that you say to me you're so icy let me warm your hands.

## Ode to Water

I greet you water and make an effort to emulate  
your sense of cleanliness  
your ability to adapt to changes  
your stubbornness to flow in spite of barriers  
Without you there is neither fish nor wheat germ nor the tobacco leaf  
cut up and rolled into the cigarette I smoke while trying  
to figure out your cunning decision to be  
sweet and salty at the same time.

## Last Love

It was like the first day after the creation of the world  
before the first song before people before the invention of language  
There was only manna from heaven and light and a white day  
Nothing has yet touched the land nothing had a name  
It was like the first day after the creation of the world  
Everything still had to be invented.

*Translated by Evald Flisar*

## JOZEFINA DAUTBEGOVIĆ

### Jedan prilično dobronamjieran Bog

Postoji jedan prilično dobronamjieran Bog  
koji nakon popodnevnog odmora uključi  
svoje već umreženo svemirsko računalo  
i otvori *file* s mojim imenom da se podsjeti  
što je zapisano u genetskom kodu papilarnim linijama  
Provjerava sklonosti i ostale detalje DNA  
On je božemioprosti dobronamjieran ali vrlo zaboravan Bog  
kako bi mi ispunio želju otvori mi poneka vrata  
tek kad sam unutra zaključim da to nisu ta  
ali vrata su se već zatvorila.  
Nekada zna biti nagluh i prilično tvrdoglav  
pušta me da ga dugo molim ili snažno kucam  
dok me ne uhvati panika  
Obično otvori kada izgubim svaku nadu  
i ja posrćući upadnem u prostoriju  
što ne ostavlja bogzna kakav dojam o meni kod prisutnih  
Dugo smo zajedno ali ne radimo baš sinkronizirano  
Znade me držati u nedoumici prignječiti mi prste  
ili ta ista vrata zalupiti pod nosom tako jako  
da mi danima zvonu u ušima  
Ne smijem ni pomisliti reći što katkad mislim o njemu  
No i on o meni nema baš visoko mišljenje  
Prijeti da će me reprogramirati kad bude imao vremena  
Misli mu često blude po voćnjacima u vrijeme zrenja rajskih jabuka  
Predpostavljam da me još malo trpi samo zato  
što ga nitko usrdnije ne zna moliti  
i što mu na poseban način izkazujem zahvalnost

Prilično je star pa se bojim  
može kad zadrijema slučajno pritisnuti *delete*  
Kad ozbiljnije razmislim bude mi ga žao  
jer znadem da već dugo kao i ja strahuje  
od virusa u svemirskom računalu.

## Zadnja bosanska zima

Kamo god idem nosim je kao nasljednu bolest ostala mi je u kostima  
u koštanjoj srži  
Zima mi je ljeti na Hvaru Korčuli ili Opatiji svejedno  
Ona u meni traje beskrajno duboko se ukorijenila  
tko zna u kojem dijelu mene leže svi njeni snjegovi koji su dok mene nije bilo  
kao u narodnim pričama o ukletim predjelima padali sedam dugih godina  
i pretvorili se u ledenjake  
Od tada mi se godišnja doba mijenjaju kao na filmu samo pred očima  
a u meni zima traje  
Sigurno sam u kostima kad sam odlazila ponijela zadnje bosanske snjegove  
bez svijesti da ih nosim zauvijek  
Kažem u kostima a tko zna gdje su se zavukli  
možda mi stanuju u sivoj moždanoj masi pa se sruče neočekivano  
taman kad se opustim na +30 C i uživam kao gušter na suhozidu  
Iz čista mira osjetim odnekud puše vuče me leden vjetar za rub haljine  
prepoznajem ga miriši na bosanske snjegove ali on mi za svaki slučaj  
maše palminim granama ispod nosa da me uvjeri  
Iako u pravilu ne jedem sladoled svaki put na dnu zdjelice  
s voćnom salatnom žličicom dotaknem sleđeno voće  
Moja me bosanska zima pronade usred ljeta na uskim ulicama  
primorskih gradova izvuče se iz nekog podrumskog otvora  
ili iza tamnih oltara u romaničkim crkvama  
Zbog nje jedino ja nosim vunene veste na ljetovanju  
a kad ulazim u more svaki put poželim navući čarape  
Zbog nje mi ti kažeš kako si ledena daj da ti ugrijem ruke.