

RISTOVIĆ, Ana



Ana Ristović, born in 1972 in Belgrade, studied comparative literature at the Faculty of Philology. Her poems have appeared in all major Serbian literary magazines and newspapers (Reč, Književne novine, Povelja, Letopis Matice srpske, Poezija ...). In Slovenia her work has been published by Literatura, Sodobnost, Dialogi and Apokalipsa. For her first collection of poetry, *Dream-seeing Water*, she received the Branko Radičević Prize for the best first book of the year (1994), while in 1999 her book *Entertainment for Idle Daughters* was awarded the Branko Miljković Prize. Her poems have been translated into Slovene, German and English. Since 1998 she has divided her time between Ljubljana and Belgrade, living, as she says, in "internal exile".

Ana Ristović, rođena 1972. u Beogradu, studirala je komparativnu književnost na Filološkom fakultetu. Pjesme je objavljivala u svim najznačajnijim srpskim časopisima i listovima (Reč, Književne novine, Povelja, Letopis Matice srpske, Poezija,...). U Sloveniji je objavljivala u Literaturi, Sodobnosti, Dialogima i Apokalipsi. Za prvu pjesničku zbirku, *Snovidna voda*, dobila je nagradu Branko Radičević – za najbolji pjesnički prvenac, a za zbirku *Zabava za dokone kćeri* 1999. nagradu Branko Miljković. Njene pjesme su prevedene na engleski i njemački jezik. Od 1998. godine živi i radi na relaciji Ljubljana-Beograd, po vlastitim riječima u unutrašnjoj emigraciji.

ANA RISTOVIĆ

Beautiful Dead Seas

From day to day all I give you are things that evaporate:
mist over asphalt, mist in pockets
and fields stripped bare by beastly words.
Instead of a ticket for two
I offer you passages through the eyes of needles.
From day to day, I pour in front of your feet
beautiful dead seas.

We live by counterfeiting
chronic freedom: the address is known.
Between the main prison and the old sugar works
where poets used to end up, and where now
other down-and-outs gather vanished delights.

But I think all I need is one town:
the network of streets created by your veins.
Tent and refuge provided by your skin.
And that your hair is the Birnam forest
that will come towards me even
while I stand rooted, like a candle:
burning too strongly sometimes sticks me to the ground.
I deceive myself that water pouring
from mouth to mouth is enough,
even when it turns to ice.

In your land of the young with overmature minds
I am an immature girl who needs to be led by the hand.
In mine, where time had come to a standstill a long time ago,
I carry the soul of the old and the views of a wise bitch.

You're telling me I have to get used to
a new aggregate state:
what evaporates in the boiling south
you change here by handwork into water
which you can sell for goods.

You bend over,
rest your heavy head in your hand:
your sigh increases the distance
between our two half-empty glasses;
mine pushes them to the edge of our table.

"I buy immediately, but I pay with my body," I say
and lick a droplet of sweat off your brow:
it seemed to me to glow like
the end of a cigarette.

"Too much comparison kills even a poem,"
I hear you say, seeing that your
entire hair and cheeks are already aflame:
only I don't know whether because of excitement
or despair.

Leibnitz

Day and night, night and day
we're travelling to Slovenia:
in the little bus, the silence between us
growing like
a town cut off from the Earth and the Universe.

Still enigmas, like two
lazy flies, each curled up
alongside her window –

She, a little old woman, Maruška maybe –
in her lap crumbles a cookie brand-named
"Leibnitz"
as if newly separating a monad from monad
and smiles, staring into the darkness
of the world which is still
the best of all worlds ...

She who knows harmony –
Maruška, Blažka, Mojca maybe.

In my lap, in a bad light,
on a bad road, I crumble poetry,
page by page, word by word and I hear:
Srečko Kosovel renounces happiness
because every beauty is part of pain.

In his verses
there is no excuse for God
and the monads He sends
never reach the Earth:
like a deceptive snow they evaporate
in the first layer of the sky.

In my lap, the book of the poet
whose name has in advance renounced
harmony with his heart and soul.

Day and night, night and day
we travel to Slovenia,
she and I, still unknown to each other ...

And the whole universe rocks
on our knees
as if wanting to separate from sleepy God
and find complicity
gently whispering into our ears:
“We’re brothers, born of the same father ...”

Face to Face

Days for last testaments, days for confessions: the first poem
in which I said "I",
entering words as if sewing a button on my breast pocket
with my eyes closed.
On my left side, above my very heart.

I guard it by stitching with care
because I read somewhere that
sincere poetry is tailored
when you convince your heart that you have left it.

When you have no more words
about love, trembling, punishment,
not even about things that gave your memory
a wide berth,
then the unspoken
expresses itself; and only then

do I become responsible for
what I am not,
and what I may yet become.
Each word descends slowly
like the point of the needle,
looking for the right distance from skin and heart.

For the measure of still bearable sincerity.
For the skill of a tailor who does not hide his face behind
cloth.
For the moral of the story whispered for centuries
by old Hassidic men close to a warm wall:

About the Earth which is only God's thimble –
a way of protecting His hand
from pain
when the needle slips.

ANA RISTOVIĆ

Lepa mrtva mora

Iz dana u dan dajem ti samo isparljive stvari:
maglu nad asfaltom, maglu u džepovima
i polja koje su pojele strvine od reči.
Umesto karte za put u dvoje
nudim ti prolaze kroz iglene uši.
Iz dana u dan, prosipam ti pred noge
lepa mrtva mora.

Živimo od krivotvorenja
hronične slobode: adresa je znana.
Između glavnog zatvora i stare šećerane
gde nekad završavahu pesnici, a sad
drugi klošari skupljaju iščezlu strast.

A mislim, dovoljan mi je samo jedan grad:
splet ulica koji čine tvoje vene.
Šator i zaklonište od kože.
I da je tvoja kosá, birnamska šuma
što će mi prići i onda
kada stojim ukopana, poput sveće:
prejako sagorevanje ponekad me prilepi za tle.
Varam samu sebe da je dovoljna voda
koja se presipa sa usta na usta,
čak i onda kad se pretvori u led.

U tvojoj zemlji mladih sa prezrelim umom
sam nedorasla cura koju treba voditi za ruku.
U mojoj, gde je vreme odavno već stalo
nosim dušu starca i nazore mudre kuje.

Govoriš mi, da se moram navići
na novo agregatno stanje:
ono što isparava na uzavrelom jugu
ovde radom ruku pretvaraš u vodu
koju možeš prodati za blago.

Saginješ se,
na dlan spuštaš otežalu glavu:
tvoj uzdah poveća daljinu
između naše dve poluprazne čaše;
moj ih potera do ruba zajedničkog stola.

“Kupujem odmah, ali plaćem s telom,” kažem
i poližem ti kap znoja sa čela:
učinilo mi se da svetli
kao žar cigarete.

“Od previše poredjenja, bankrotira i pesma,”
čujem te i vidim, u plamenu su ti već cela kosa i lice:
no ne znam, da li od ushićenosti
ili od očajanja.

Lajbnic

Dan ni noć, noć i dan
putujemo ka Sloveniji:
u malom autobusu, među nama
tišina raste
kao grad otcepljen od zemlje i sveta.

Još uvek neznanke, kao dve
lenje muve, sklupčane
svaka uz svoj prozor –

Ona, mala starica, Maruška možda –
u krilu drobi keks, marke
“Lajbnic”
kao da monadu od monade iznova deli
i smeši se, zureći u mrak
svetu što je još uvek
najbolji od svih ...

Ona, što poznaje harmoniju –
Maruška, Blažka, Mojca možda.

U svom krilu drobim poeziju
pod slabim svetlom, na lošem drumu
list po list, reč po reč i čujem:
Srećko Kosovel odriče se sreće
jer svaka lepota deo je bola.

Nad stihovima
nema opravdanja za Boga
i monade što ih šalje
nikad ne stižu do zemlje:
kao varljiv sneg ispare
u prvom sloju neba.

U mom krilu, knjiga pesnika
čije ime unapred se odreklo
harmonije sa srcem i dušom.
Dan i noć, noć i dan
putujemo ka Sloveniji,
ona i ja, još uvek neznanke ...

I čitav svemir ljulja nam se
na kolenima
kao da bi da se odvoji od usnulog Boga
i traži saučesništvo
šapućući nam nežno, na uho:
"Braća smo, po ocu ..."