

IVANA BODROŽIĆ

In a Sentimental Mood

– selection translated by Damir Šodan

FOR CH. P., BIRD

Easter Island
The Navel of the World
Eyes staring at the sky

How did they manage to drag those huge rocks,
those big-headed statues,
and who placed them there,
the island gives no clues,
just a few theories –

first they carved them somewhere else,
smoothing out the bottom with unknown tools,
then laced them with ropes from all sides,
proceeding to rock them back and forth –
they must have looked like walking gods
it must have lasted a while, for one had to calculate
the exact angle, the weight and the force
so they don't fall over

or

maybe they built tracks out of bamboo sticks,
across a big meadow,
slanted just about enough
so that the rocks could rotate
over the wooden blocks

then

the culture of great monuments
was replaced by the cult of “Birdman”
leading to the majority of our sculptures
being damaged or discarded

people devoted their lives to that,
calculating density, measuring the weight, the height of Moai
building models
first small ones, then ever bigger ones, so they could figure out the secret
of Easter Island

we stared at their life passions,
our eyes shining, distant from each other on that couch,
there was nothing around us anymore,
just like then when the Little
Ice Age ensued causing the forests on the island to disappear
followed by the invasion of Polynesian rats who ate up
all the nuts from the remaining palms,
but neither of us had the courage to change the channel.

How did you end up here?
they will ask one day studying us,
so scattered and damaged,
and coming up with theories, making models,
as no traces were left behind.

Simply put, the era of the “Birdman” worship arrived, that’s all.

SUMMERTIME

I'd like to plant something that grows,
let it be full of red juices so you can smear the street with it.

Let it have its own beginning, something with hard, elongated seeds
that can be rolled between the thumb and the forefinger,
trundling down a wet palm,
something that needs
a certain
amount of earth,
humidity
and light,
so you know it will continue growing, sprouting a green shoot, piercing through
the greyness of the seed,
exactly like it happens in those documentaries
they shoot with those miniature cameras –
first the leaves,
then the ever-thickening stem,
then the miracle of budding,
followed by the mysteries of love and death,
appropriation, pollination, falling off
and finally
the fruit,
as the skin pierces under your teeth tasting
precisely like a cherry
or on the contrary like an apple
with no nuances in between
either or
so I'd love to plant something that grows,
for I'm tired of all the dissipation, those life-defining nuances,
the incessant yes and no
the could-be and the not-necessarily-so
the sure-it-will-happen and the perhaps-never-will.

Just a drop of cherry juice in my throat,
I think, and I would be saved.

THE SHACK

I heard it from a third party,
about The Shack and The Shack's wife –
about him selling 20 million copies
of his book wherein God is a witty black woman,
Jesus a gimp with a Semitic face,
and the Holy Spirit an Asian woman

A famous and rich writer
who once cleaned toilets
received and dispatched parcels
worked as a night guard

Anyway,
his wife has strange hair,
although her hair is in fact normal,
it's probably that each and every one of us
wants to feel somewhat special
and so does The Shack's wife,
disregarding the fact that on top of everything
she forgave him for his adultery
which he talks about publicly
as one of the proofs of God's love.

She couldn't find a towel big enough
for that hair of hers in America
(when she wants to roll it into a turban)
but she did find one in Croatia
so she bought ten pieces right away
that now need to be shipped somehow to Oregon

so now she needs an extra suitcase and she already has many, way too many things

The Shack will travel further, first to London,
then to the Netherlands, then back to London
only then finally back home overseas
for he is a great and famous writer
who goes everywhere preaching and signing books

Then he leans over to his wife and her extraordinary hair
and says something like:
Darling, don't you worry about a thing,
I'll take care of everything,
I will pick up those right-sized Croatian towels
fly over to the UK with them
and deposit them in the hotel's safe
so I can collect them on my way back
and bring them over
to America

to you

We all laugh, grinning, for The Shack is cheap
and his God is a real American product
He loves everybody
punishes no one
and comes in various colours
and his life
including the childhood sexual abuse
is one hell of a tale

When we exhausted our laughter
our faces still in silent grimaces
for a split second we avoided each other's gazes
because his wife
has a husband
who carries towels
for ordinary hair
all across the world
because he thinks it's something quite extraordinary
and he believes in that as passionately
as one believes in God
and no one can prove him otherwise

Faith is Love
Love is God
It's so cheap
yet so unattainable.

I'd love to be a father to my daughter
with soft and fragrant little hairs on his hands
so she can bury her nose into them, get drunk on something
dark, masculine and secure.

my feet a size 43 European at least
so she can get on top of my toes
feeling taller than everyone else
and not slip down

so she can hide behind my back

and eye me seductively

so I can be her anchor when all else is gone,
her last, very last unconquerable
resort

so I can know how to laugh
mess things up
play chess
and know who Perseus
was in love with

and disappear altogether

for fathers know how to disappear convincingly
while mothers remain here to be hated

with twisted lips
and stiff shoulders
their bodies generally prone to decay
with very few if any tricks up their sleeve

while hating their own mothers
who never knew
how to father them.

MY ONE AND ONLY

I fear I will stop fearing
for if I stop fearing,
even for just a moment,
I fear something will happen
and not that which I fear the most,
but something else, really fearsome.

So for as long as I fear,
I am secure.
I am horribly afraid
though I know there is no fear,
trembling in the night
is just a small price
I pay
so I wouldn't fear
that which is most fearsome,
the worst thing ever,
the moment that awaits me
if I ever let out a sigh of relief
and forget my fear,
smile naively at someone
in passing,
thus making happen
that which I fear the most.

That's why I stay awake and fearful,
peaceful and secure,
and I caress it, nurture it, soothe it,
so it can grow big and strong,
to guard me and always be by my side,
my one and only,
my fear.