

**Neva Lukić**

**From the future poetry collection *Gooseflesh***

**Translated from Croatian by the author**

**Suggestions and corrections: Vida Lukić, Harry Walker**

### **Possibilities**

In the darkness of the universe, the tingles began.  
A few tiny, rounded bumps, each carrying the needle's  
eye inside.  
Soon the limpid hairs sprung out of the gaps through  
which one could see  
different sides, fourth dimensions, and  
numerous faces' reflections.  
One hair sang:  
*I'm bisexual!*  
Another tremblingly said: *Here I am,*  
*sprouting out of dusk!* And the third  
shivered in fear: *I am an invisible*  
*incomer...* They rose firmly into  
ether, responsive and sensitive  
in their translucency.

### **Transit**

If goosebumps could endure for years,  
they would dry like drupelets on a blackberry the  
mountains of dry, purple seeds  
would fall out of our bodies; the  
boundary would forever remain  
disembodied!

The peaks of the waves would withdraw into the  
holes dug out by wild moles

The sea would be steady  
The world would wait for transit.

## **Ghosts**

We search for spirits in the corners of reflections We fear  
the dark room where somebody died We think ghosts are  
invisible, untouchable,  
they can appear, disappear as they like

Ghosts are actually different  
Very physical, through our bodies they equate  
the living and the dead Through our bodies  
over goosebumps, in cuneiform letters written  
long ago  
When our skin for a moment breathes in and the  
hairs into the air imprint

Ghosts cannot appear when they wish

They depend on the breaths of the living, on the  
language of here and now

## **To die in the desert**

On my back I carry Beauty. Beauty,  
heavy, hunchback crone infinite  
Matryoshka doll,  
the last particle much heavier than  
the gaps of the universe.  
In your fingers she transforms into the  
light grains of chickpeas; through your  
fingers she falls along the wooden  
bodies  
of Matryoshka dolls, along the  
circle that whirls on the thin  
waists of girls!  
The grains of chickpeas so light fall  
through the tunnel of the gap

between the walls  
where the elevator of stories once  
upon a time was,  
going from one story to another, from the  
second to the third floor... When the elevator  
was finally gone we realized that all was one  
story even if very distant and long  
leading to the azure ring of an old lady who  
had a glass in which goosebumps had long ago  
been aroused;  
so when I walked with Beauty, a  
heavy old woman on my back I spilled  
them on your fingers and the roasted  
grains  
lured you to the film sets where my  
body transformed into a heavy,  
azure, steady mountain;  
into all the weight of the world's Beauty  
(!)  
forever catching her breath in  
heaven,  
and then constantly suffocating in  
land;  
under her womb the surface of the  
lake  
where the chickpea  
grains prostrate and  
flowing blood flows  
and flows  
because it only flows when  
the veins join.

## **The Light**

Precisely in the thin wrinkles of the sheets Among the  
slippery togas of the departed snakes

## The Light

In the north, where the night lasts nights, at the  
first traces of light on their faces people shudder  
with whole gazes

## The Sun

For them so far away.  
With their thin fingers  
it would create forest fires.

**From *Shadows of the Seeds (Sjene sjemenki)* poetry collection, HDP, 2015 Translated by:  
Natalija Grgorinić & Ognjen Rađen with Daniel Allen Cox**

**To Mr. Huxley: A Manifesto that will never be translated into English**

Mister Huxley

The English language penetrates everything All  
languages of the world corrode  
Words rust shards of letters Get  
tossed along the way

The words of other languages become Bits of  
fruit pits

Half-gnawed animal bones Some sort  
of a world on a road Some sort of  
bulging world

With malicious moles on its cheek Stalks  
on a woman's chin

A vermiform appendix worming in  
all our intestines Of all that is  
rudimentary Whose meaning  
we understand less and less As if it  
is getting away from us As if it  
rustles in our mouths

Creating (making) unnatural sounds That  
are almost foreign to us Something between  
human

And animal

We wish to hide these inadequacies

We wish to hide them even in our graves And  
English

English is a language of wide streets, For  
streets,

Are always connected

English is a language of formed asphalt

Of calculated freedom and art It  
doesn't bulge at all  
Nor is there anything carved into it  
Except maybe the footprints of conquered nations But those  
are simultaneously  
Last human breaths  
And first human utterances in This  
brave new world  
Where even the trees  
Are implanted horizontally

We really do walk through this world Mister  
Huxley  
Horizontally Almost as  
if asleep  
Some of us even very proudly Because  
we feel a part of the world  
And to those of us who still haven't fallen asleep All of this  
is hilarious

For, what kind of a human race is this That has  
lost its pride,  
How to look up if  
From every side hard cement Blocks our  
view,  
Consumes our arms and legs, What kind  
of a human race is this That has turned  
global  
In such a way that it has become  
The very surface of our terrestrial sphere?

As good as dead,  
Mister Huxley, As  
good as dead

We're left with only a hope That soon  
your vocabulary, too

Influenced by our Barbaric  
lingua franca  
Will thin down completely  
And that together with us, we will Mister  
Huxley  
Discreetly pull you into the abyss Of the  
Tower of Babel,  
Into the abyss of regression and the rudimentary

### **Language**

Language is a crippled dancer Of  
ungainly movements  
A drummer of soft percussions  
In despair it dives with its oral cavity first  
Outside of it attempting to create an invisible order, To touch  
with a word those beloved fingers  
Like a wind that touches balcony chimes Sad that  
forever it has to stay inside,  
A puppeteer in the eclipse of the universe

### **TheWordLaParolaLaPalabra**

Words are seeds scattered  
before people as if the air  
is mowed with them

In a moment  
we flock on them on  
yellow seeds sui semi  
rossi sobre las  
semillas azules

as mute we swallow holding  
hands  
in a nimbus around the Earth

We think we have caught the  
Word  
but it is scattered,  
never completely  
fused,  
full of holes and changes, Big,  
endless,  
its tail sticking out of  
Universe's closed Doors. It is  
never one.

Words are apples  
above the basket!

Always a plural Or  
only a void.

Today the skies are clear.  
Today is gray.  
The space for spreading the  
seeds.

### **Language system**

I  
Mother tongue is an organism of air, an  
endless fence in front of the sky, words  
aired with voids.  
It is a bench to sit on,  
the original plan that by its structure stops  
all other plans,  
thus shaping  
the tridimensionality of the world.

In it a chair chairs,  
and the letters of the handwriting are thin... With no  
word to describe them,  
except maybe for 'hairs'.



II

Foreign languages are beings of water... They  
embrace me with their  
swaying seas,  
a whale carries me in its body into a  
damp darkness of culture's forgotten  
depths...

I cannot stop it.  
I cannot stop anything,  
everything is faster than me  
Now the story narrates me  
instead of me narrating it

Before me  
hundreds of languages spawn, these are  
nomads,  
these are the same languages we  
carry in our mouths before they  
get  
rooted and implanted deep  
deep  
into the oral cavity  
of the mother tongue.

Here there is  
Fear and Freedom  
A vortex consumes us and  
turns us  
into something else

Only the seagulls see clearly the  
images we are cut into.