

SAMPLE
TRANSLATION

JURE JAKOB
SELECTED POEMS

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Jure Jakob: Selected Poems

Gulls

I wish I were somewhere else.
Not that I know where that is.
And I'd not be getting up to anything.
Just somewhere I could get back from
or some place I could stay.
When I take in the air, I tend to know.
Light is not the most important thing,
because it changes all the time,
but air is.
That breathing comes easily.
That you can intake & give out.
Tired in the evening, fresh in the morning.
That the movement's good.
Somewhere where you like to work.

Three gulls flying above Ljubljana.

Pylons

Slanting snow, Sunday open to the sky.
The play of water and cold unfolds
in even, fantastical sequels.
Three figures cut through cluttered pavement
like apparitions.
I'm seated at the table by the window that's
planted into the thick northern wall.
The child's asleep with breath zooming
round the room, fisty-fighting the snowstorm.
Two thoughts veer headlong on the slippery slope.
They come to a stop at the top, take sledges
from their backs and sit down.
Look, mother 's waving at us.
Look, there.
The sledges go rushing across the white clearing
like crazy,
Gusts of wind and fine snow, back & forthing
a starkly bewildered child's face,
leaning
across the imagined edge.
Then a cough, a moan.
I sit and follow all this
like a vigilant dog,
on guard under the tall pylon
& eat Sunday snow.

Garden

Given what I see every day
it helps to say
anything

Today it's raining and the salad's growing,
the day resembles no other
and what will tomorrow be like.

It won't work, I find myself saying.
Maybe it's just one of those years
but the earth goes deeper

and the sky always brings some gift.
So important it all is
and constantly changing

and this hurts like hunger
like fleshy stinging nettles at the edge of an allotment
which I cut down with a scythe.

Given the lavish performance,
the bounteous holiday of seeds and fruits,
I don't do much work.

That means I do
what needs to be done
so as not to forget what's vital.

When we go from here
we'll take
the garden with us.

Spring

Mornings follow mornings, days repeat them
as though they want to merge into one vast morning.
The corner road by the playground turns from fresh shade
and pulls up directly in front of the sun.
Each morning this happens a little bit earlier,
soon, perhaps by tomorrow, it will be too early even
for the road & it'll wake caught in sunlight.

It's worth starting the day early.
Wearing a glove of dreams we skated across
icy tracks to live & sleep through the darkness.
To open the windows & air the room. In the morning
cold air positions itself on all fours between
the floor and the ceiling & holds the entire day upright.
White cherry tree, last snowdrops, new ball in the courtyard.

There's no nature mornings can't find.
Nothing is unnatural. Work flows from one morning
to the next, the postman rehearses his way address by address,
until gradually he empties the gold-blazing bag
and rests by the low wall of the fruit orchard. The bee doesn't notice him.
Children from the kindergarten, on their walk, make a ring round the parked bike
like a delightful forecast for the next day morning.

On flexible string, taut from the early morning

washing hangs, socks walking in the wind, tottering
trousers approached by noon falling almost
into a forsythia bush. That rare connoisseur of morning,
the invisible cuckoo, lays out trap eggs and sings
from the tree opposite. The echo is a fleck of time
that passed from morning, and came back on a moment's delay.

Throw the ball toward me. I'll chuck it back.
No matter if it runs out onto the road. It's worth the try.
The cherry lit in the darkness sheds blossom all the way to daylight,
and in the morning white the ball lies by the edge-wall and looks
like an egg. Next to it cold air is parked.
Returning from the sunny walk, one of the children
finds it & carries it to the playground & everyone follows :

It's never too early to repeat the exercise.

Young crow

A young crow came.

It's sitting in a black baking tray

I left out on the garden bench

so as not to forget

the elderflower blossoms.

The baking tray is full of

young crow

beak opened

screaming searingly.

Then it leaps to the ground,

makes an awkward totter round the garden

and returns.

The elderflower bush smells good

all the way back to here,

but she wants to be somewhere else.

She doesn't yet know how to fly.

I take the baking tray into the kitchen

and tell the whole story.

In the evening we sit at the table.

We've done eating the fried elderflower,
from outside the sound of

the wind's rustling.

Again I'm the last one
to bed.

The minute I close my eyes

I see the crow.

The world is young.

And then it all goes blank.