Three Words: Foreign

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Three Words: Foreign

A Collection of Poems by Nina Stojković

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts of the City College of the City University of New York.

Mentor: David Groff

May 1, 2013
Who doesn’t break into pieces
Who remains whole and gets up whole
Plays

[Vasko Popa]
Table of Contents

I
Before I Came

Clasped hands 6
i run down the stairs to 7
Singidunum 8
You took me out on long walks 9
i recall the long lights of your car 10
The basketball prodigy with dreamy eyes 11
Flickering astrology teased their tongues 12
In rare moments of stillness 13
a solder, in someone else’s yard 14
I put flowers on your bed 15
Soft clouds weep 16
I put on a blue silk tie 17
It crept in softly, one evening in December 19
Woke up 20

II
We Persist In Tides

Ablation 22
What day is today? 24
Hurricanes and avalanches 26
Birth inscription on your left arm 28
They never touch 30
Medicine man 32
Her rag dolls habituated 33
I walked into a store to buy a ring 34
Underneath my eastern folklore 35
Once she wore his tall hat 37
Silk 38
Under my left breast 40
Tick tock tock tick 41
She boxed all of my stuff in the corner, against the mirror 45
Once I left my pen on a pillow 46
Divorce me 47
You ask me what I wore to your funeral 48

III
You Made Me Eat It

He sees this glass on the table 53
I lick my mornings wide open 54
The Feast 55
Optical illusions dripping from your tongue 56
She whispered softly her grandmother’s secret recipe 58
Discernment occurs 59
It splits my rib cage 61
You brand me so I’d come to you 62
I

Before I Came
§

Clasped hands
In morning dew
    Tulips endure
What we do not speak of

    Traffic noises
Stain my shoes
    With disregarded architecture

    Unfastened incline
Drives savored hotness
    Onto my skin
Sensation plants
A bite on my lip
    For future reference

    The skies open up with
Petals of mundanity
    Coloring my irrelevance
    Instantly
§

i run down the stairs to
catch a dropped ball of yarn
my grandfather’s accepting hands
tend my childhood scars
i ride a bike impatient and ripe
end of our street seems too far
a boy on a curb gasping
his fingers soiled with compliant muck
i give him my marbles and a kiss
declining to join hands
my homework always done on time
approval comes with no intention
jump into the blotted river
clears my mind for one cosmic instant
my cousin’s budding bosom
curiously inspires touch
inquiry about my girl parts
discomforts those who do not answer
a boy cries for my vagina
i choose to eat ice cream instead
death comes suddenly but not too early
my grandfather’s still veins delineate my existence
i give you my hand woven scarf
your reason exhausts my daydreams
unwillingly, I take off my shirt
and dive into the zenith of doubt
§

Singidunum

Hugging the dirt under the fortress
Two rivers marry again and again
Witnessed by our virginity and ideals

Rain cascades over crosses and chimneys
Undermining sacred tenets of our ancestors
Deflating compliant artistic notions

Cobble stone sounds off her heels
She grabs my arm firmly
Ripeness overflows forecasting a fresher dawn

Adorned in fragrance of a marketplace
Cherries and melons map out our corporal passage
She stays silent, undetached

Blinded by the imminent pleasures
Our racing hearts declare the anticipated
Forgetting that nature amends her seasons

Bells play off beat
It’s 9
No
It’s 10
No
It’s almost midnight, magic will wear off soon

Embracing the imminent past
August sings
Of a town where we left our youth
You took me out on long walks  
It was winter  
Snow persisted  
*Romantic* you said  
I couldn’t have known being sixteen and all  
So I smiled  

You took me out on long walks  
And I remember  
Your glove holding my bare hand  
Suspicion twisted my muscles  
But my tongue would not obey  
So I kissed you  

You took me out on long walks  
Across cobble stone streets  
Over ancient bridges  
Through soiled sheets  
I trusted your taste in women  
And your interpretations of Rilke  

You took me out on long walks  
As sparrows nested above my window  
My hair grew 4 centimeters  
And I started to smoke  
*Be right back* you said  
As darkness engulfed your intent  

Liquid trailed down to my sandals  
The odor of your relief cleared my nostrils  
I anxiously licked the air  
*You are safe in the shadows* I concurred  
And strolled on
i recall the long lights of your car
sucking in the sticky air of our
preemptive temptation

hard ground
thin blanket
and my sister’s shirt
ruined

early spring adorned our pubescent
anger with warm hues of
lust and
rejection

your clumsy strokes
and long strands of grass
tickled my open mouth with
comic relief

your zipper got stuck
my panties got torn
and just like that
we grew up

sanctioned years of our adolescence
taught us how to sprinkle
sugar over rotten fruit and eat it
faking pleasure
§

The basketball prodigy with dreamy eyes was the first one who kissed her, French style.  
She liked it, a lot, so they went all the way.  
He left her for a curly blond who developed early.  

The soldier on leave touched her, just the way she liked.  
Spring grass smelled of his fresh shaven face.  
He could not have been more than two years older.  
Train whistles and images evaporate. Smells stay.  

The law student took her to jazz clubs and told her about Chet Baker.  
He wanted to kiss her neck but she hated his sweaty palms.  
She told him she is a punk girl forever.  

That tall dark guy, who allegedly lost his virginity to her, felt right for a while. Until, one breezy spring afternoon, he twists her arm, intentionally. It didn’t hurt, but it clarified.  
There is a reason why seasons change.  

The swimmer was handsome and strong and learned in the ways of women. He marinated salmon for her and made her drink out of his spring. They talked while they fucked. She could see beyond the Milky Way. Except, his breast strokes could not reach her emotional undertows.  
He said goodbye. Properly.  

And then, there was her husband, educated, sensible, unassuming, thoughtful. What was wrong with him? She can’t remember. Pawns gradually deserted the black and white board, but she was a queen and 

she had the final move. Checkmate.  

The horny, the depressed, the unavailable, the flaky, the clingy, the immature, the aggressive – all made it into her independent feature production. In the darkness of a movie theatre, she re-evaluates their roles. Happy endings are predictable, but we still pay to see them. And we never ask for our money back.
Flickering astrology teased their tongues
Into combat
Peons in someone else’s board game they
Fought their own war

silent
impatient

A different June night they would’ve gone swimming
Cooling off their steamed existence
At this moment, the sticky perfume of absurdity
Infiltrated their pores
Camouflaged in
First kiss thrill

rebirth
restored sanity

Proximate obliteration echoing in their
Throbbing temples
Crumbling architecture pulsating in their
Bone armature
Unexpected affection shuddering

uncertainty
and fear

Nothing else existed
Behind her eyelids they owned the world

She replays the scene in her mind
Casting shadows on the ceiling to portray
The eerie episode of her so called life
Disfiguring the intimate autonomy of her room
Sirens howl yet another warning

She won’t be dreaming tonight
In rare moments of stillness
You barely resemble yourself
    Or I remember you incorrectly

I cut my hair and changed my name
To dispose of your hedonism
    But insomnia lingers

My pores clogged with liquid steel
Lines we uttered in unison
    Now sound Kafkaesque

I leave my safety pin on your dresser
In attempt to mend
    Frayed tissue
“…Prepare myself for a war
Before I even open up my door
Before I even look out
I’m pissing all of my bullets about…”

Damien Rice

a solder, in someone else’s yard
dawn on the horizon
i weep out loud for angels to hear
just in case

wooden horse with a broken leg
mud on your shoes
i put a scarf around your neck
it is cold outside

i hear your laughter
and i turn around
rain beating on my window
wakes me up

i get up and make some hot chocolate
i bleed in my underwear
sharp pain through my stomach
a war is starting again
I put flowers on your bed
Sun keeps your sheets warm
I sit next to you and sing softly
    I don’t want to wake you

I kiss your left cheek
It feels cold so I rub it gently
You are still and I wonder
    what you are thinking

I ask you, are you sad
I ask you, are you hungry
I ask you, are you tired
I ask you, are you cold

I sit on the edge of your bed
I talk to you but you don’t seem to care
Sun is holding my hand
    and I think it’s you

I fall silent
I rest my words into eternal cradle
I do not fear for you anymore
    you are a big boy now
I follow you in my dreams and I am happy
    that you let me

Your hair may turn gray, I won’t see it
The laughter of your children, I won’t hear
I will be long gone before you return
    and the flowers on my bed will turn to dust
Before watered by mother’s tears
Soft clouds weep
    Thirteenth May in the row
Earth lays abundant
    Of fragile clamor of bones

Engraved with determination
    I feel your name under my fingerprints
The acid burns
    But I refuse to comfort my marked flesh
Branding becomes a trend

Remember that really hot summer
    when I would wait for the sun to lower
over my house
and your house
over our schoolyard
    and I would water daisies quietly, inconclusively
Anticipating a sound

That song is stuck in my head now
    I hum it eat it cry it
Too young to sing it off key
    I listened as your lungs grasped for adulthood –
And it is yet to come

I will soon return to the place that you own
    Grateful that you would wait for me still

Warm my bed, my dear friend
    my feet have gotten cold in the years of your absence
I put on a blue silk tie and my
good shoes. I imagined you
waiting for me by the fountain, your hair
flirting with a summer breeze, your feet
dipped into iridescent glass, your wishes
reflected in strangers’ coins.

*De quelle façon Champs Elysées?* they ask you and
you reply, hesitantly. You are bored with all mundane
routines, disgusted with patterned little lives of
these ants roaming about pretending
they have a purpose.

How I wish to have captured your expression
at that moment
in oil on canvas.

I pick up the pace through traffic and crowds, hurried to
embrace your eager adolescence and take advantage of
my reputation to lure you into bed
with me. I imagined you
waiting for me by that fountain.

You told me you like to come to our dates early, find a
suitable spot to observe tourists and
guess which direction I would
come from. Anticipation made you horny.

How I wish to have drunk all your ripeness
at once
from a tall glass.

Sun was setting fast on our infatuated
afternoon. I lost you before I even had you. Your
pale pink dress, dancing in the breeze as you
ran towards me, remained permanent
ink stain on washed out pages of my recollections.
And yet
I have never been to Paris.
It crept in softly, one evening in December.
It filled every atom of the room.
I felt it on my skin, in my hair.
It tethered in my breath.
Intentional, leaving no reason to question.
Introductions were made.
Acknowledgment guaranteed.

My grandfather –
Lying in an oak casket
           Stiffly embracing my mind.
Woke up. Walked down the stairs and into the kitchen. Fed the cat. Shivered from a fresh morning breath through a cracked window. Put on a kettle. Thought. It’s Monday, it’s spring, it’s sunny, it’s life. The water is boiling. Made some jasmine tea. Burnt my tongue. Thought. It’s sad, yet lucid, it’s unpredictable, it’s life. Cat rubbing against my feet. Observed small dots in the distance – a chimney, a car on the road, a tree. We are but specks in alien eyes. Drank another sip. Thought. It’s irrelevant, it’s relevant, it’s like anything else, it’s life. Put down my tea, put on my clothes, stepped outside. Inhaled.

snowdrop flower
single determined
announces new life
II

We Persist In Tides
Ablation

They investigate new subsistence
Deep in your murky veins
Intruding
Gauging
Examining
The tangible abrasions of your mature body

They glide over your cryotic flesh
Pretending they care
Pretending they know you
Moulins apart, they foolishly believe
It is only them you love

They penetrate your crevasses – uninvited
Scraper
Scratching
Striving
To claim the prevail of permanence

But you know better than to resist
Their arrogant attempts are absorbed
By your caerulean skin
Allowing for illusion to continue
For a jagged moment longer

Your dissolving reverie tells of
Other galaxies you want to visit
Drop by drop
Stream by stream
Lake by lake
Determined – you will leave

Maybe not tomorrow
Maybe not next year
Not even next century
But one day you will be
Untouched

And they will know
Once they reach your solid heart –
It would have melted a long while since
What day is today?
It is Friday.
Mother knits a pair of winter socks for their baby. Dinner is steaming on the stove, laundry freshly folded. Father walks back from the factory. Snow falling heavily on his mended shoes. He pushes his hand deeper into his pocket, touching the envelope. It felt good, it felt thick. It will make things easier, at least for awhile. *She* will be proud of him, and he liked to make her proud. He speeds up, not feeling the cold anymore.

What day is today?
It is Saturday.
Girl stares at her reflection in the big custom made mirror in her living room. *This black dress or that deep purple skirt?* Formal or liberal – first impressions are important, and she knows it. She heard from her friend that *he* likes smart but uninhibited women. She could not know if he is going to be the one who sticks, but she wanted to make an effort. It’s not fun anymore spending nights all alone, especially when there are so many young people in this city. There had to be at least one who could be good for her. She was eager. *I am smart and confident,* she whispers as she pulls out maroon mini dress from her closet.

What day is today?
It is Monday.
She forgot her speech, but she’ll have enough time on the train to draft it again. She remembers the key points and she was always good in improvising. She will nail this deal. They expect her to, but even more so she expects it of herself. After so many years in the company, she deserves that promotion. It would be a good cause for celebration next time she goes back home. She will show *them* all that she loves what she does and she is great at it. The purpose of woman’s life is not necessarily only in bearing children. Although she would like a couple of kids one day. Not yet. She was only thirty five.

What day is today?
It is Sunday.
The old man walks by the river, not too close to the fence. Cane in his left hand does not have a rubber cover and it makes clicking noise on the icy
pavement. It is a bit chilly, but fresh air does him well. It opens up his lungs. He breathes better. He forgets about all else when he is walking outside, the river calms him down. Doves are his friends. Few rain drops fall on his glasses. He looks up. It doesn’t seem that bad. No need to hurry. Marie is not waiting for his return anymore.

What day is today?
It is Thursday.
They met at 6pm sharp, hugging like they haven’t seen each other for days. It was just this morning he kissed her goodbye before leaving for work. Hand in hand they talk softly, despite the violent sounds of the city around them. In her blue rain coat she looked as any other girl, young and pretty, happy to be in this great city, happy to be in love. The film they are going to see is a romantic comedy. *A chick flick*, he said, *they just don’t want to tell us we are suckers for paying to see something we already know the ending to.* She smiled. Placing his one hand on her budding tummy, he uses other one to open the door to the theatre. As she passed him, he leaned in and whispered, *And how I love to be a sucker for you.*
Hurricanes and avalanches
Day into day
   Brand my skin
   With reluctant butterflies
Desert storms fill in my ventricles
   With misplaced desires
   And unawaited longing

   I want to outgrow my shoes again
And gain a third set of teeth
   Longer
   Whiter
   Sharper
As hunting becomes consistency

   Resting on the wings of
Headless sphinx
   I do not dare
   Utter the answer
   To one question
   I dare not ask

   The howling
   Of hungry wolves
Keeps me sane at night
   Moon tides stealing
   My human footprint

   Looking for revolutions
And doubts that need redefining
   I dip my fingers into
   Murky milkshakes of
Interplanetary blunder
   Gods laugh at my mistrials
   As sunspots erupt
Into pool of dread
Treading water
With my penis in her mouth
    I betray all visions
    And deny all intellectual existence
Savaging last reserves of cambium
    For another shot at immortality
If only for an atomic instance
Birth inscription on your left arm
Dreamt of distances beyond your
secret chords

One two three –
Seven auburn stars
of your fragile constellation
invited me into conspiratory stellar disobedience
Leonard Cohen’s *hallelujah*
  had no answers for us

Your left hand caresses
Defiantly my “no means no”
to the bottom of my third beer
Your marked fingers press the strings
Distinctively
  Exact string at the precise time
  except not on my throbbing muscles

Your tongue outlines my earlobes
Undermining all preconceived girlish fantasies
  of reversed insomnia
  and glass slippers unbroken
And this glass object I’m trying on for size
  is half empty
  or is it half full?
Which one are you?

Ominous thirst tickles
my cerebral verses
  luring flagellant tendencies
  out in the open
Your velvet whispers spit out
drowned roses even if my name is not
*Elisa Day*
I don’t care if she’s nice
or smart or wild in bed
Fuck her reluctantly
and fuck you inadvisably
Does that make us a threesome?

Store your reasons for forthcoming snows
when my warm cunt
won’t put you to sleep
Etch my name down your spine
Forget how I got here
And buy me another round of elation

Our movie ending authenticates
the disillusionment of we
I bite into my wrist hard Exhaling
that bittersweet taste through my nostrils
You know the one, right after you cum?

I am mystified by your loyalty to nihilism
And amused by your refutation of sentiment
I want to pretend that you are real
That you are Tom Waits humming
A Christmas card from Minneapolis
Long after the last call

I don’t need you to seduce my foreign words
I know where they come from
And you will not drink them tonight
They never touch except
Accidentally and
When they fuck
Missionary style

They never vocalize “fuck”
The verb dismays them of cleanliness
But they do
The action as an offering

I imagine a
Plank on top of a
Plank

Missionary friction

My knees smart
In my temples

They never say I
Love you
To each other except
When they read news

Nobody requires them to

I declare love to my cactus alone
On
My windowpane
He answers in prickle tongue I suck
The blood dotted intercourse

My laundry awaits to be
Washed
my black t-shirt skin fades down the drain
in hot rivers smelling of “spring air”
I eat molding bread

Eardropping on their existence
I learn how to cry myself
To sleep

Spherical satellite unexpectedly
Demands a replacement of my
Failed womanhood

Where is happiness found
    If not
in passing trains
    in inconsistent faces
    in occasional arrhythmia

When there are no destinations left
I supper my last thought
§

Medicine man
Is what they called you
Amid pine branches and eagle flocks
I saw your face
Feverish
Constant
Until you cured my scorching brain
With white man’s logic
Her rag dolls habituated
In a crimson suitcase
Adorned with airport pixie dust

Landing strips hummed
Lullabies
As she combed their hair

Every now and then a stranger
In transit
Would be so kind to take them
Under his wing and
Feed them delicious lies

Oh how they elated in attention
Forgetting that Solitude always
Reclaims her subjects

Once the feast was consumed
Nausea besieged
And primal instincts induced
Fear of flying

Her insecurities were her
Most faithful companions
And who was she to disrupt such loyalty?
I walked into a store to buy a ring. Subtle, understated, a ring of promise for the one who deserves it. I observed and considered and concluded. No ring was good enough for you. So I left.

Awhile later, I repeated the attempt. I went back to the store, but all rings looked too much alike. None could express my appreciation of your faithful conduct, your cooking expertise, your lucid interpretation of poetry. I felt they were undeserving of you. No decision was made.

After many years, a proposal emerged again. I wanted to buy you a ring that concluded your expectations. Rain got into my broken-in shoes. Chill crawled in through the holes in my pockets. The store was closed. It was a Sunday. I remembered how your hair smelled.
Underneath my eastern folklore
Your hand finds the answers
Of loose buttons
And black pantyhose
Our flesh proficiently translates

Between your language and my native tongue
We spit promises we cannot keep
I love you
I leave you
*Rose petal lokum* tastes the same
Before and after intercourse

ETD (estimated time of departure)
Forces our vows
Into a cold green hands
Of an immigration agent

I get a new life
You get a new wife
The administration smirks upon *true love*
And so do my in-laws

As my hair grows, you work more and more
My *musaka* is too salty
And it makes us soundless
When we supper
TV flickers with delight
Reality shows win again

Borders are trespassed but
Grass was always greener on the other side
And now, our boat is damaged
With no other way of going back
But to swim

Languid water awakens
Oceans apart
We dive
We swim
We struggle with torrents

We slowly
Give in

Our blues streaks into the green
Of my independence
Disillusioned hues are grinded into opaque
Little stars of what ifs
Once
She wore his tall hat
And inherited his panic attacks

They would saunter around the apartment
Uninhibited
Until they could not remember anymore

There was little time for nourishment
He cooked seasoned infidelity
Competently
She poured resentment in Champagne flutes
Repeatedly

Birch utensils left splinters
Inside their sighs
But they were too drunk
To care

Rummaging through the debris
Of each other’s touch
They learned treachery

When establishment exposed them one day
Beneath a blanket of burgundy
Their tongues were smiling

No one was surprised
Silk

Her left arm drawn behind her back compliantly to the point of flinching
Your desperate remedies arching

I’ve missed you, baby
I’m almost there

Her eggshell house with umber fence and a couple of puppies
Your monochromatic frame filler

Not now, baby
I’m almost there

Your fingers drip down her back tenaciously
Her ablation filling in your evaporating life lines

The clasp validates

Birthdays Holidays Anniversaries Presents and late night texts abound in sweet and sour single serving

Hang on, baby
I’m almost there

Crooked crimson lettering of your commitment Scores back of her neck her shoulder blade
her toned upper arm

Single titanium stripe smudges
  her cheek
  her restrained mouth
Reminding of the luminance
  outside of these paper walls

  Her gratification
comes the morning after
  restrictedly      dependently
  Tracing the ultramarine palette of
your absence

She lingers
  bound
  silenced
pulsating from within
  as
you take her
  inhibitions
  for granted

  I love you, baby
  Right there
  Right there

She holds
  her breath
your grip tightens
  and everything dissolves
  rapidly      violently
  as
you pant
  false syntax      in release

You switch your perennity      for
  her sublimation –
Still
  she aches for more
Under my left breast
I cut out a map of longings

My shoes are two sizes too small
Which helps me think

When I walk underneath a passing train
I make a wish
And it almost
Comes true
Tick tock tock tick
Hour by hour
Time is a woman
Time feels

I feel time
My woman
Puckers her lips
Seducing my ideals
Away

Lust dripping
Clock ticking
Time standing
Still

I swear I will
But I don’t
And I won’t
Tides echo
Away

And I feel
That woman
Fairy of the North
Six months sleeping
Six months keeping
Our lust alive

Hour by hour
Time is a woman
Time feels
Tick tock tock tick

Her pillars keeping
My mind calm
Rains touch
My mornings
Soft

Lust dripping
Clock ticking
Life standing
Still

And I swear I will
But I don’t
And I won’t
Woman ticking
Away

Her pulse probing
My chest hard
 Warns of offspring
Unsprung

And I hear
That woman
Fairy of the North
Six months breathing
Six months reading
Another verse
Away

We count
Songs and kittens
We count
Birds and snowflakes
We count
Clouds and poets

Time is a woman
Time feels
Tick tock tock tick
Hour by hour
I feel time
My woman
Combs her hair
Trading her beauty
Away

And I see
That woman
Fairy of the North
Six months nursing
Six months cursing
Our love alive

Lust dripping
Clock ticking
Dreams standing
Still

I swear I will
But I don’t
And I won’t
Sighs melting
Away

We count
Meals and sunsets
We count
Smiles and nightmares
We count
Leaves and reindeers

And I need
That woman
Fairy of the North
Six months seeding
Six months weeding
Our touch alive

Time feels
Tick tock tock tick
Hour by hour
Time is a woman

I feel time
My woman
Closes her eyes
Counting my fragments
Away

She stays
My woman
She feels
My woman
She keeps
My time alive
She boxed all of my stuff in the corner, against the mirror. Camus was crying out, but I could not facilitate. I leave my arteries behind, but I take my books with me, every time. She knew this about me. She changed the door lock, the alarm code, her last name. I want my life back, she said. Who doesn't, I thought and fucked her best friend. It seems redundant to excuse myself from myself. After all, Bukowski is a good door stopper.
Once
I left my pen on a pillow
Feathered with morning sickness

Then
Eagles drew blood from the
Weakest among them

Now
My immigrant fingers sculpt
An audacity of recognition

My tattooed body aches to be confirmed
§

Divorce me.
Riots endure the masculinity of our mornings.
Storms share residue.

Allow me.
Coffee and cigarettes support my anorexia.
Our ancestors betrayed.

Divorce me.
Leather ribbons can restrain the mad only for so long.
 Silence bites at every admission.

Conceive me.
Rabies conclude the undertaking.
Blood cleanses the childless womb.

Divorce me.
Before time.
Before rain.
Before I dive into my eye and
spoon it out permanently.
You ask me what I wore to your funeral.

The very first time, it came as a surprise. So I wore black.

I woke up early in the morning, before birds, and brushed my teeth. I did not wash my hair but rather combed it vigorously, pulling it back tightly into a perfect bun. The velvet pin you gave me for my birthday kept my hair in place.

I put red lipstick on and stood naked in front of a mirror. I pictured myself in assorted mourning outfits. Some appropriate, some uncomfortable. Hours passed. Naked still.

I reviewed a scene from a movie where this woman was at a funeral of her man. She was all in black, dress, hat, veil. When the coffin was in the ground and people started to turn around and leave, she leaned over the edge of the fresh opening and lifted her veil revealing the reddest shade of lipstick I have ever seen. I was four. And I remember thinking Oh how wonderfully sad this woman is. I want to be like her one day. The lipstick was a nice touch. A bow for her sorrow.

Black underwear.
Black bra.
Black freshly pressed button down shirt.
Black stockings.
Black skirt.
Black shoes.
Black tie.

Yes, I wore your black tie. Laugh if you will, but people noticed. They assumed Oh
how most wonderfully heartbroken you look in
black. The tie is really a nice touch.

I believed them. I did not cry.

The second time I went to your funeral, fear did not possess.
I wore emerald green.

I woke up at noon and hurried out without
brushing my teeth. Few randomly chosen
pieces of clothing, one white, did not show signs of
my month long insomnia, lack of nourishment, and
intentional social isolation. My
hair was washed.

The retail lady asked me if I want to try it on and I said No…
thank you. I knew it fit. I knew
it will enunciate my breasts, my thighs, cover my
skinny arms and leave enough breath under the length to
disclose the emerald sandals you got me on our
island honeymoon.

Emerald underwear.
Emerald bra.
Emerald dress.
Emerald sandals.

Sun was comforting. I thought about
strawberries. People noticed, again. They confirmed Oh
how most wonderfully heartbroken you look in
that emerald dress. The sandals are really a nice touch.

I believed them. I did not cry.

The third time I went to your funeral, familiarity had broken my grief.

I woke up around nine, ante meridiem, perfect time for
waking up. I took a shower. I washed my hair. I brushed my
teeth. I dried my hair. I put on body lotion that
smelled like lavender. You always commented on it.
The white suit looked as no one ever wore it. Maybe no one had. I was the first. A calming stream of tenderness dressed me up.

White underwear.
White bra.
White freshly pressed button down shirt.
White pants.
White jacket.
White heels.

I walked slowly, gazing around, distracted by the Mexican funeral nearby where they sang and danced celebrating the dead. People noticed me. They looked in my direction with questions I did not want to address. Undress. Redress. I pronounced Oh how most wonderfully heartbroken you look in that scowling query. Your unuttered remarks are really a nice touch.

They did not believe me. But I did not cry.

The last time I went to your funeral it was June. I wore nothing.

I woke up, day leaving me slowly. I did not brush my teeth. I did not wash my hair. Birds sang. Waves of wonder slammed into my skeletal shores. I ate my last bowl of soup. Fulfillment. Completeness. Purpose. I did not ask why.

I stood in front of a mirror. The whiteness of my skin was unbearable. I closed my eyes and pretended it was black, absorbing all other frequencies of light. Absorbing everything.

You came towards me out of the left edge of the mirror. Softly. Unchanged. You smiled. I smiled back.
Noticing my bareness, you avowed Oh
how most wonderfully heartbroken you look in
your natural attire. Your hair is really a nice touch.

I believed you. And I cried.
For the very first time.
III

You Made Me Eat It
He sees this glass on the table in front of him
Water Folds in daybreak indifferently
He sees a question Blooming in this glass on the table in front of him
Thirst Urges him to negotiate history
He sees a proposal Mounting inside this glass on the table in front of him
Asserting the margins of consciousness that is
Now

Crisp sound of dismantled starlight Introduces what he already knows
The Feast

Lusty Chicken Marsala
Herbed Seasonal Chicken
Perfidy Chicken Chowder
Acrimony Chicken Mango Chutney
Mediterranean Chicken l’Egoiste
Grilled Chicken with Spicy Vacillation Sauce

The right amount of salt
Easy on the cumin
Now and again tender
By no means overdone

You ruse me with feasts of gastronomic exception
You dress my appetite in bones and skin
Of alternative lives

I coincide silently
But what can I say with a mouth full of wings

I settle
And I eat
I twinge
But eat some more
Like a headless bird
Sensing the prologue to a great recipe
Frantically bumping into her Executor
As if to thank him

You feed me hen
And all I really want is
Cock
Optical illusions dripping from your tongue
Exist only in fourth dimension
I am number five

I try to believe the seasons in your eyes
But rains come down hard
Charting my ovals and fissures into a treasure map
Lazy pirates don’t seek the treasure

You say
“I look at your birth constellation and it melts my snows
That is why I hunt, to distract my chasers”

I understand you and don’t judge
I sharpen your spear with my lullabies
Mend your cape with invisible threads
I paint your face red with my virgin blood

Shamans sing of a King’s daughter
Who disobeyed her father and slept with a mortal

Lovers burn squirrel skin at night
To swathe their smell for trailing wolves
They eat morning bark dipped in moss
They bath in each other’s urine
To trick the witches

Every time they vomit, they grow closer
Catch a butterfly at the end of a day
Hold its wings lightly
Blow softly into his antennas
And make a wish
Pin it down on the east side of the willow tree
Make an offering to Hunting Gods
They do not desire to break the curse
But to die in sleep, together
It is believed only then
The four seasons will come together
And approve their incestal dream
She whispered softly her grandmother’s secret recipe
For a perfect breakfast
He listened patently

1 oyster egg
1 wing of a monarch butterfly
5 gently plucked dandelions
2 juniper seeds
a spoonful of overcooked tears
4 scales of a beaded lizard
1 read of Prevert’s poem
a pinch of mint

Combine ingredients with medium zeal
Into a non-conspicuous fusion
Maintain stirring through at least three precipitations
Turn the heat down and
Let it simmer in sighs

Best served with a glass of fresh goat milk
With no more than five milligrams of
Salted vows of a left lover

She pricked his palm with needle number four
He hissed and released three carefully guarded tears
She held the vessel ready
No other words she spoke
As night lost its youth

In the morning
She touched the opposite side of the bed
It sang out of tune
She knew she cooked too far
Discernment occurs
Crystallized like meth in a shack down south
Straps around them tighten
Forcing them to shoot up more of this liaison
That lies beneath their tentacles

Deliberating the impending outcome
He savors the taste in his orifice
Finds a spot
Settles in
Patiently
Waits
For his prey

She approaches haphazardly
Confirming the mechanical virtue of curiosity
Like moth into a light
Closer and closer she comes
Comes
Comes
Cumming still

Mouth wide open
Spikes flash with saliva
Palpitation subdued as to not create a ripple effect
And then –
It snaps
His lustful jaw
Seals shut

Iridescent trail
To emancipating surface –
Swallowed

As she becomes his
Submerged in a pool of
Doubtful corals
And self-deprecating oxygen suds
The hunter munches on lean muscles
And taut skin
Delicate bone frame is fractured
Ruthlessly

Both
The hunter and his prey
Fall victim to statistical margin of error
Impious script alleviates –
Alas, too late

Their secular thirst
Humorously delineates the mirage of

Love Divine
It splits my rib cage
I look at my phone and then the hour
I think of my family

Acidic torrent attacks my left side
While I read Mayakovsky
And wonder if irony is permanent

I eat when I’m bored
The frequent provocation
Becomes my silent companion

Familiar twinge confines me
To hold hands with Him
In absence of firm convictions

Health Insurance does not cover the inconsistent
And I am all
But a believer
§

You brand me so I’d come to you
    I dress myself in ribbons and needles
    Hum my own lullabies
And let you have my namesake

You cloth me so I don’t shame you
    I bare myself to all under the Sahara skies
    Covered in poetry and lavender tea
And let you have my truth

You feed me with language so I’d tell you how I feel
    My dreams stay my own
    Leading me through labyrinth of your definitions
And I escort myself out

You paste expressions on my face so I’d believe
    I laugh, I cry, I wonder and fear
    Swallowing ideas away from those who do not think
And let you have your entertainment

You fly above me revising the earth for gain
    I choose to remain diminutive and frail
    With centuries under my pelt
Your wings will eventually tire out

I let you have a bite of my heart but only I will know
    It is the lesser half