

Reetta Pekkanen**POEMS**

from *Kärhi* ('Tendril'), Poesia 2019

translated from the Finnish by Jouni Teittinen & Reetta Pekkanen

Blue whale has a heart the size of a car, and it beats

Each night, although I lay awake
and though it's hardest to have faith in what's real

A thousand million tons of animals
rise from midnight zone to shallow waters

There are sad stories with a happy ending
There are happy stories with a happy start

What still is nothing doesn't need to feel like anything

A hundred thousand miles of black keys alone
and not a single hand able to reach them

A hollow comfort that opens in the leaving unsaid

hardly comforts another. Near the cave's mouth
in the area still touched by light
there's a see-through quality to happiness

A zone of twilight
I nearly got there

—

At the altitude of six miles already
the graspable starts getting harder to grasp

the sky doesn't lack birds.
It just doesn't need them

There's a stairway no one wants to use.
It takes you down and stops

There's fear like that before a jump
and then there's emptiness with nothing to follow

Like you were followed by nothing

Stage one: the universe cooling
down is a stage that will never cease

—

All that's heavy, like comets and guilt
is taken seriously much easier than joy

Here in space it's dark around the clock

we're circling a second or third generation star.
Illuminating night clouds illuminate

Even a single houseplant helps to alleviate loneliness.
Intertwined they swarm against the night sky.

You should flutter entire in the wind, when you're torn
It's short-sighted to remain as you are, when you're torn

—

Get a point on the compass, and you've got all the points
To get just one sound, you have to be willing to hear the noise

What supposedly was unique and fragile, now dully repeats

Owls sleep inside live trees and people
live and sleep inside dead trees

—

If it explodes but it's not in a hurry

it is probably serious.

But you can not just be approached, you can approach

And in the same instance you thought you saw a bud
in a spot where there's still no growth

you already proved yourself
capable of believing it to be true.

The vine draws weight out of nothing
The vine keeps pushing further out

—

In froth flotation, minerals containing gold, sulphur and copper
attach themselves onto air bubbles and rise to the surface

I have ten fingers to touch you with,
with each onto a slightly different place

from *Pieniä kovia nappuja* [Small hard buds] (2014)

translated from the Finnish by Matias Loikala

one end of the world amidst all ends of the world.
One traveller amidst the jam of all the lonely
the same generic roadside view: in the ditch
some thick bush birches branches bush.

When you're supposed to be giving your all when it's the final night
every night: since we decided to walk to the finish line
let's walk to the finish line

Explosions that halted to await us
some shards of airplanes frozen in tailspins
in them the small gardens that have started to grow

how that is grown fond of: just one end of the world
this one, my own, in greenish yellow
some thick bush birches branches bush

a lawn full of twigs and white petals
a dizziness attack and its earthly remains.

Like it was unreasonably early to wake up
autumn clears a single tree first as a sign to others

and when no blossoms remain

if you tell a child their life has no sense
they'll then imagine a thing called sense

—

wind has lifted the ants off the ground
Shadows that always form on the same part of the bridge
underwater spotlights as I'm walking home

Now that we must in any case imagine a future

when the lights are on in any case throughout the night
I'm pretty sure I feel like something
and I walk home. A thrush is singing,

loose in the wind a tiny generation

a storm cloud races out on the sea
sails get darker on its way, yet
I don't mean to go back. A certain kind of gratuitousness
that there's enough water for under all boats
and for those who fly the gap between the continents
some skerry to rest on.

What if the gulls' scream is that which they want to say?

—

That isolation would be sought
even under the threat of losing the connection terminally

Thirteen percent of all living geese carry shots inside their bodies

It was wondrous for a long time. Then Space
was only just a colossal space

—

in the sound of the ambulance all that needs to be remembered

the truth about the mornings when she closes the door behind her.
Today at the latest we must start building
all kinds of factories so that the birds won't run out

and when she cries: filed visual perceptions
of what we will lose
everything that flies, the days we sway
side by side like swaying on a piano stool
which we will lose

from *Salakuljetuksia* [Smugglings] (2021)

translated from the Finnish by Matias Loikala

A moment and a stumble later
I visit the sorrow in secret from myself
You had also peeled some oranges, there
Orange peels and some space in its place
in place of the grass, the misplaced

—

At times in your rest, the pale yellow spreads
into the corners and to be seen clears
up the shadows and the unhappiest is
the one to whom even sorrow doesn't stick

From somewhere amongst the coleuses and wishes
certainty was shed, suddenly redundant
about the order and hue of things: soon
that too is the humus of opening anew

—

It shines on spots high and gorgeously vacant
as you look

Maybe saying aloud isn't needed, maybe
some fluttering quote marks can be draped there
edges of hits. You hit. It hits

and a tic in discretion, right
next to the left elbow, sticks

—

Closer, slower, ghosts
can't reach to give counsel if hopes
won't for a moment release their attention
from us and recede, away
Of love, of patience, ghosts
say something already

—