TRANSLATIONS

Lisa Barca

Giovanni Pascoli, La Tessitrice

Mi son seduto su la panchetta
come una volta…quanti anni fa?
Ella, come una volta, s’è stretta
su la panchetta.

E non il suono d’una parola;
solo un sorriso tutto pietà.
La bianca mano lascia la spola.

Piango, e le dico: Come ho potuto,
dolce mio bene, partir da te?
Piange, e mi dice d’un cenno muto:
Come hai potuto?

Con un sospiro quindi la cassa
tira del muto pettine a sé.
Muta la spola passa e ripassa.

Piango, e le chiedo: Perché non suona
dunque l’arguto pettine più?
Ella mi fissa timida e buona:
Perché non suona?

E piange, e piange - Mio dolce amore,
non t’hanno detto? non lo sai tu?
Io non son viva che nel tuo cuore.

Morta! Sì, morta! Se tesso, tesso
per te soltanto; come, non so;
in questa tela, sotto il cipresso,
accanto alfine ti dormirò.
Giovanni Pascoli, *The Weaver*

I sat by her, close to the loom
as once before... how many years ago?
She, as before, moved to make room
close to the loom.

Not the sound of a single word;
only a smile all devotion she shows.
Her white hand lets the shuttle go.

I cry and say to her: How could I have
left you, oh my sweet dear, how?
She cries and says to me with a mute wave:
How could you have?

Then with a sigh the cloth beam, on its own,
steadily pulls the mute comb forth.
Mute, the shuttle moves to and fro.

I cry and ask her: Why is it silent?
Why does the sharp comb sound no more?
She looks at me kind, and shyly:
Why is it silent?

And she cries and cries- My sweet love,
didn’t they tell you? don’t you know?
I’m not alive but in your heart and soul.

Dead! Yes, dead! If I weave, I weave
for you only; how, I’ve no clue;
in this cloth, below the cypress tree,
In the end I will sleep next to you.
Edna St. Vincent Millay, *Elegy*

Let them bury your big eyes
In the secret earth securely,
Your thin fingers, and your fair,
Soft, indefinite-colored hair,—
All of these in some way, surely,
From the secret earth shall rise;
Not for these I sit and stare,
Broken and bereft completely;
Your young flesh that sat so neatly
On your little bones will sweetly
Blossom in the air.

But your voice—never the rushing
Of a river underground,
Not the rising of the wind
In the trees before the rain,
Not the woodcock’s watery call,
Not the note the white-throat utters,
Not the feet of children pushing
Yellow leaves along the gutters
In the blue and bitter fall,
Shall content my musing mind
For the beauty of that sound
That in no new way at all
Ever will be heard again.
Elena Borelli

Edna St. Vincent Millay, Elegia

Seppelliscano pure i tuoi grandi occhi
al sicuro, nel segreto della terra
le tue esili dita e i chiari
fini capelli di mutevole colore.
Tutte queste cose, di certo, mutate
risorgeranno dal segreto della terra.
Non per questo io siedo, lo sguardo immobile
infranta, completamente svuotata.
La tua giovane carne, che aderiva armoniosa
alle ossa tue sottili, dolce
fiorirà nell’aria.

Ma la tua voce... nè l’impetuoso urgere
di sotterraneo fiume,
nè l’innalzarsi del vento
negli alberi prima della pioggia,
nè il pallido richiamo della beccaccia,
nè la nota che modula l’uccello dalla bianca gola,
nè piedi di bambini che premono
gialle foglie lungo i marciapiedi
nel cupo autunno amaro
rallegreranno una mente che indugia
alla bellezza di quel suono
che in nessun’altra guisa
mai più s’udirà.
Sweetly through the sappy stalk
Of the vigorous weed,
Holding all it held before,
Cherished by the faithful sun,
On and on eternally
Shall your altered fluid run,
Bud and bloom and go to seed;
But your singing days are done;
But the music of your talk
Never shall the chemistry
Of the secret earth restore.
All your lovely words are spoken.
Once the ivory box is broken,
Beats the golden bird no more.
Dolce nello stelo turgido
della rigogliosa ortica
stringendo ciò che prima stringevi
nutrita dal sole fedele
continuamente eternamente
trasmutata la tua linfa scorrerà,
ora germoglio, poi fiore e seme.
Ma finiti sono i giorni del tuo canto.
Dalla terra segreta la chimica
non restituirà
la musica del tuo parlare.
Detta è per sempre ogni tua amabile parola.
Quando si infrange l’eburneo scrigno
più non batte le ali l’uccello d’oro.

TRANSLATIONS
Entranced by intermittent white sparks
I craft a beast or a person to exist

who truly dreams while the imposing thunder
wakes - restless, eternal fever to write (to right?)

my mind, liberate all rogue thoughts to ensure (to insure?)

a layered gift bound with cerulean ribbon
that allows me to savor

the imagination still.


Diego Arias

The Kind Observing the Wolves

Smoke the spirit flames.
Wallow with apparitions, there
Fly the scarlet beasts, along the grass and stone.
They use the scissor bones.
Aardwolves, brown hyena incubus!

Dine they with grace and sip the cherry juice.
Ribbons of meat, on their backs I see a hue,
That forms on each a glowing bushy tail.
And follows to their fierce erected ears.

Ascending demon dogs,
The stars they form a strip of fire.
Molly Prosser

Devil Fish

In a vendor’s stall at La Bufadora, the devil fish clutch the wooden beams, the stiff dead cartilage of the sting ray exposed, and I can’t help thinking that it’s hard to hide the deep down, and soon we’ll shed our feathery bodies and everyone will see what’s left, what’s worth five pesos and a cold Corona.
Hatching

After C.W.

Stunted arms, skinned knees and floor. And once again, over that jilted ocean, silk sandbars, parched sandbars, and once again, over the sky, the great pearl of pain.

Coo of Tortuguero’s canal, crescendo flipper-lines of la playa; the end is bitter. Maria at midnight; tag guns along the tents. What crushed-leaf shells, this beautiful massacre . . .

And again the exertions of hope, tender unknowing: new mouths, new patterns, alone scamper in a hail of salt. They will know what they have been.
Luonnatar

“all alone in the vast emptiness of heaven, Luonnatar created the world”

~Norse Creation Myth

There was light yes, and water like the rise of a full belly. For eons she drifted in the terrain of the seas, tasted the first stirs of eternity. Creation begins with water; the licking of it around her mouth, and her voice said, I want. She was devoured by the topaz seas, it’s ability to beckon and lure. Her risible voice sang, Yes, Make me. The gods answered with a bird. Her lap a nest, and the thin reversible creation of eggshells would pulse and quake. This was the first song she heard, and her joy was constant. The second song was the heavy crash of eggs falling. She watched them open. Out fell the stars from the mosaic shells, the sun from the amber-yellow yolk and the moon wrapped in white like a distant glacier.
PHOTOGRAPHY

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Serenity
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A Moment Past
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Wonder