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Kosovo

Mgr. art. Pavol Janik, PhD. (magister artis et philosophiae doctor)
Translated into English by Smiljana Piksiades

(for Jan Tuzinsky)

A burning
paper Goethe
prays
in Serb
for four hundred dead children

In Schiller's stone eye
gleams a tear of mercury

There's a Gypsy weeping
for a little Romany fairy
at the bottom of the Adriatic

Blood
has an irresistible color
of the bluish dusk of the sky
from which falls
light and glitterings
like a gust of May rain
to fertilize the wounded earth.

Molto Adagio

Mgr. art. Pavol Janik, PhD. (magister artis et philosophiae doctor)

Translated into English by Smiljana Piksiades

The old move in.
Slowly and clumsily,
not of their own volition
and without somebody else's help.
Tiresomely they move their old-fashioned furniture,
their antediluvian opinions
and dogged pains in their joints.

With shaking limbs
they look in vain for switches
on the unfamiliar walls
of their new living space.
They can't manage to switch on the light
in a twilight of loneliness and unknowing.

Pointlessly they utter all the words,
which they now remember with difficulty.
Their own words
no longer mean anything to them.
They don't understand them.
They've forgotten what they were for.
They remind them of nothing.

For them. For honoured and precious persons,
to whom respect and gratitude are due.

The old move in.
Tediously and maladroitly,
unintentionally
and completely alone.
Sluggishly they move their old-fashioned furniture,
out-of-date opinions
and importunate pains in their joints.

Persistently and unpleasantly
they touch us
with their trembling extremities.
Dejectedly they catch us by the throat.

The old move in
on us.
Little by little and inexpertly,
willy-nilly
and under their own steam.
Strenuously we move our obsolete furniture,
used-up opinions
and painful joints.
And other things
which have already served their purpose.

Inconspicuously and unavoidably
we become honoured and precious persons
to whom respect and gratitude are due.

Tenaciously and depressingly
we continue in the persistence of our actions,
fluently sliding into the punch lines of stories
of course like the hands of a clock.

With our head we direct
all the way down
ready to strike the precise time.

And above us
a blue sky
yawns incomprehensibly
into which the wind flings the glittering mirrors of memory.