

I V A N B L A T N Y

These poems by Ivan Blatný (1919-1990) are taken from his collection *Pomocná škola Bixley* (Torst, 1994). Because they are macaronic, it was judged best to print the originals in full, followed by the translations. Another selection of Blatný's poems appeared in Matthew Sweney's translation in *Modern Poetry in Translation* 17 (2001).

—JQ

Léon-Paul Fargue: Droga

Nemohu zapomenout na pocit jednoho rána v Alexandra Park
kdy jsem byl úpně spojen s bílými holuby
byli bílí jak sníh

On pán všeho tvorstva stvořil drogu zvanou artein
the drug of art
of modest small old surrealistic art.

Léon-Paul Fargue: The Drug

I can't forget that feeling one morning in Alexandra Park
when I was completely joined with the white pigeons
like white snow

Creation's lord created a drug that's called artein
the drug of art
of modest small old surrealistic art.

Big Warehouse Sister

Renesanční malíři objevili perspektivu
surrealističtí malíři objevili magickou
nevím v čem to záleží ale kolejnice se sbíhají dále než do daleka

Zas slunce válí zlatou tykev do daleka

Churavý Ortene z Hejnova portrétu sed' a naslouchej mi
budeme psát
povídku o hraběnce ze zámku.

Big Warehouse Sister

Renaissance painters discovered perspective
Surrealist painters discovered the magic of...
I don't know why but rails run into one another beyond the distance

Once more the sun rolls a golden gourd into the distance

Ailing Orten of Hejnov's portrait, sit and listen to me
we are going to write a tale,
a tale of a countess from a castle.

Život

Nikde nebýti, ó nikde ty má zemi,
chtěl jsem být uvnitř, hluchoněmý.

No, I stay here on the gas-pipe line,
surrounded by british policemen.

I won't ditch my old knife,
I'll stay in the monastery.

Life

To be nowhere, O country I am from.
I wished to be inside, be deaf and dumb.

No, I stay here on the gas-pipe line,
surrounded by british policemen.

I won't ditch my old knife,
I'll stay in the monastery.

Svět

Die Musik ist fein und fern
they sing a song of Jerome Kern

Don't you cry little Jeremy
smí se teď někdy říci "my"

A naše loď je jediná:
Zahrada, město, dědina.

The World

Die Musik ist fein und fern
they sing a song of Jerome Kern

Don't you cry little Jeremy
we're now allowed to speak as "we"

And our boat—we have only one:
Garden, village, town.

(Translated from the Czech by Justin Quinn)