

PRZEMYSŁAW OWCZAREK

**THREAD
ROULETTE
EAST ON THE BIEBRZA
FROM ARGUMENT
NEW YEAR'S EVE IN PRZECHODY**

TRANSLATED BY MARK TARDI

THREAD

when I have a choice? – I choose the rain
and I see the wanderer. the coming monsoon
in his earthy eyes. premonitions writhe like trilobites.
laughter falls from the nostrils and haunts

the desert. the sea abandoned us. we're its film
woven from the threads that Cervantes spun for
Harry Mathews. an unknown bottom. I saw – a ball became

a woman. whispers of her nine profiles.
on the hills of Helicon, dogs were seduced. in her mouth, the name
of the father clotted. (how'd you call it, Monsieur Lacan?)

eternal betrayal and beautiful sin. if you ask – I'll choose
the headroom.
the eye in the weave.

ROULETTE

color in a certain context can change
hue. a copper night. two dreams ago you bought
a revolver. the snake shed its skin and turned into
a chicken. at least so it seemed.

you shook the quills. slipped into the pit.
like a deranged miner you counted breaths. on
three: *extract the light from the shell, reveal
the seeds of words, and go out into the meadow.* you'll wake up.

the sky will brace your steps. the land will abrade
your head. insert only one round and spin out the sun.

EAST ON THE BIEBRZA

a raven-headed man passed by.
his eyes scattered like buttons.
scampered like sparrows. a woman with

bluish skin casually removed her dress.
crumbling, her hair made of hoarfrost,
suspended. and I dreamt about when your

feet sought warmth under the covers of Pooh
bear. dawn just crept along the wall. the lips
were swollen from hunger. the hand on the breast

looking for affinity found it in the wide-open
body. two ravens by the river argued
with the air. and drops on the glass defiantly

walked towards the sun.

FROM ARGUMENT

III.

if something's born and something dies, there's something
"neither." neither drizzle, nor glint on the glass.
as if an old song was flying from inside.

NEW YEAR'S EVE IN PRZECBODY

I.

five hours of sleepy driving to Białystok. Mrs.
Jagoda was waiting for us on the dirt road.
then her Nissan ran across the bridge over the river
to the house in the clearing, where a long table's overgrown
with ham, herring, a green bottle of moonshine

labeled "Elk's Kick" and a line
which I don't remember. but the fire passed
through the body as if it were an altar for the new
year. we didn't wait. the Russian front snagged ice
in the swamp, and Biebrza was sprinkled with the tracks of bulls

and elk. the game were captured in snapshots.
we played dice drinking Bordeaux. somebody mentioned
shopping at Lidl, guarantees for success.

II.

the unbelievably arduous encrustations
of frost. writing about nature? – an antiquated style.
especially on the morning's reconnaissance with the barrel of
the Canon ready to shoot. who will believe

in a hunter's adrenaline, which needs
to seep through calculated syllables, penetrate
the snare of references. don't flirt with
the lighting. before cooling down the river in you

find a solar flare, glaze, the rotted specters
which stain the path. you'll end up back at
the table. in protestant myths, the banker's dream
in a poem, which you don't reveal to friends.

or the cold laughter knocks them off the bridge? let them pass.

III.

the day was pure as moonshine. foxes dance around
a flock of wild geese. the watchful flight of the hawk.
and pupils remember small killings.