

Athina Papadaki in one of the most distinguished contemporary Greek poets.

She was born in Athens. She did studies in Politics. She is now working as a journalist.

Her stories for children have been broadcast on radio in Greece.

She has published numerous collections of poetry, four of which published in two volumes are compiled here.

These first collections of her work to appear in Britain should serve to establish her distinctive work as an important new voice from Greece.

Earth and Again and The Royal Town of the Balcony

Athina Papadaki

Dionysia Press

Earth And Again & The Royal Town of the Balcony



by Athina Papadaki
Translated by Thom Nairn - D. Zervanou

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Earth And Again
&
The Royal Town
of the Balcony

by
Athina Papadaki

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and D. Zervanou

EARTH AND AGAIN
&
THE ROYAL TOWN
OF THE BALCONY

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EARTH AND AGAIN

THE VIRGIN ADORNED IN A VEIL

WOMB MOTHER

Womb
Mother
in a white head band
an ancient palm
turning the wheel and the seed
sheering off
towards the final affliction.

Pregnancy.

A kingdom without ramparts, only the water speaks.

In the natural procession of the stars
the natural world
is theirs.

The first woman arrives.

Woman in the full length of shadow
with the scarf of the siege
over her eyes.
"On Thursday" she will say, "the oath was born".

She will impose steps and kneeling.

Beautiful

she will never have need
of true beauty.

Second in the row
defining her position
like an artesian well.

Baths
to cool
passion
but not knowledge.

A bee
there, where the tongue
seeks
the bitter taste.

The last woman

abrupt and double-edged
her sandals moving toward the Ekwatana
with the dust of Sparta on her hem.

This sacrifice will reach far
into the depths of the pit
with the lights stronger at the turn of man.

A difficult road
unqualified,
kilometres of deep desert from the heart to the lips.

And, you know,
life is a moving mountain,
what new shadows, what new groves.

Then slippery
in her hands
the big fish, the silver fish
loosens the tap of the sea in sleep
she has no air, no breath.

The first cry in open space
the steps of the lioness.

THE SHEPHERDESS OF THE CEILING

There was Helen from Megara
sailing on her sewing-machine
naked
her belly too heavy to lift,

the only jewel
was the pulse
under the skin.
And Chrysanthe from Iolkos
with the Muslem fez on a tray.
Sugared almonds
in the shadow of the pillow.
And Despina the ewe
forever unloved
with white hair
only three inches from the ground
so that desire never would reach the earth.
Even Danae appeared with the harsh
legends of shepherds
around the mirror.

Close by is Dorothea
with a dowry seven yards long
the world of coffee is closed
Xerxes at its opening.

Their faces were large
unbearable
over the cradle
at the same height as the old lamp.
And the rough wood of the ceiling
was like high ground,
how could they cross it?

Dance in the pack of cards
darkness in the most wise
patience.

It was then,
with milk circulating in my mouth
they slapped me on the forehead
with a no
pure twenty four
carat gold
they named me the shepherdess of the ceiling
growing wool
on whatever I touched.

I raise their skirts.

Unique to each one.
The first fabric is Jasper
the second nacre
the third topaz
the fourth silk
the fifth linen
the sixth calico
the seventh fine calico
the eighth burlap
the ninth fleece
the tenth leather

Here I must stop I said,
years later.

I must sing of those
who taught me deprivation.

MEMORY OF A BIRTHDAY

A birthday and white cambric,
the distant season of hazel-nut
turning the body into fruit
from too many embraces, too much love.

White-bows, the exhilaration of the birds.

Crackling, igniting the hair
sufficiently to dazzle the dreams of boys
like a shield of silk.

It was February

when the relatives arrived.
Aunt Rose with Mina.

THE BAIT

The first hour
beats in my pulse.

Laurel-thicket mirror.

I pass
I
in my mother's high heeled shoes.

Forbidden steps
and varnished nails.

Here
on the edge of creation
my shoulders bare
to subjugate the fur.

DECIMAL MYTH

A female coin
on both sides.
Only the plaster crevices watch
queens of the wall
with the golden earrings
of the siege.

only
those fingers
in a triangle only just covered in hair.

This is
a rare satisfaction
preceding
the bible.

Beatrice with Mina
no mountains
not even hills
only the secret curvature of adolescence.

Far
very far
the sea leaves on a honeymoon.

THE WHORE

The world
with its secret corners of rehearsal.
 The day belongs to the mirror.
A half sent message through open doors.
Naked whores
gigantic
as they screw up their faces at my passage.
 At night the dome of the ceiling
 opens.
She is of two sexes.
Placing aside the ornaments
she descends wide-open
seeking that great investigation of the thighs.
 Something
 something from the deep
 something infallible
 shines like nature.

Whatever, even that which
is thinner than silk is torn up
the unspent male, my vision, my touch.
The other world.
Striding
naked between her open thighs.

I cast light.

THE LIE

The veil of February on marble lips.
Then the Spring
and a vessel of water on my skin.

Private garden.

They wore shiny furs
and hats of velvet.
In the drawing-room the chandelier is a one way street
fresh air on their black cars.

The lights of the kitchen were on,
over the white apron
lay the saliva of the master
like lace.

Aunt Catherine at the head of the table
bow ready to play for her guests.
She knows
the secret
She lowers (her eyes).
The nap of the carpet is doubled
so that the sperm
 dripping from the lips of Thalia
 in her double bed
 will not be heard.

THE DAY OF THE WHITE HORSES

THE BRIDE

Slowly I descend from the heavens.

First lace

Second branch

One hundredth bead.

The veil is carefully lifted.

To my left side are horses in the pallid blue
until the appearance of

Pandrossos the obedient,

my name is among the cows.

The mind cultivating

cotton and cabbage

the other language

clay in the blood.

Girl in an elaborate territory

with kataifi

spinning its golden hair on the stairway

of almond.

And the violin

the king with his red nails

pointing to

the night,

on her palate

the Bible is thinking.

Tulle in the commandments

in abundance.

I will live

EXIT

Rain
and I was worn out
before reaching the gate.

Hands
holding snakes
to place in the masculine dream
something
beyond the wheel.

Milk before becoming liquid where does it nest?

CHILDBIRTH

Her womb in a slippery state.

Below

Sanio from Amphissa,
the eighth decade of her hair
scattering like cloud.

All in in white
to reveal the sacrilegious scalpel.

The first pain pounds like a drum.

The firmament curves.
A gradual metamorphosis.

Oranges act as guards!

The head man blows through these fallopian tubes.

Silently
He turns.
He observes.
His cave is full of sound.

He is pushed out by the wise mountain.

I am yours on you I will illuminate four faces my touch feathery to
your western planet I will not betray the oriental elements nor the
drum in the whitewashed light of the tunnel the sound and the slow
process.

Sun Sun Sun

standing for the dark silhouette of the cicada in recumbent Byzantine

clothes no I will not betray the phantom behing the wall from that
place where the masked Sheik of the fireworks descends at the turn of
the moon the ranged wells are full

Water Water Water

taking the tiniest of cells to construct itself this minute mind no I will
not betray the spices which were lost a sign that the rum of Ebony is
dying yet nonetheless the reign of your beard grows longer to meet
with the diamond ascetic climbing to the summit of laws with only one
sandal

Earth Earth Earth

crying I still tighten my fists not allowing the flute to fall still
uncontaminated by the air throw me the rope you who before giving
me
form loved me.

Courage of the north close your gates.

The blood vessels open cleanly.

The town tends her hand
and the umbilical cord
the domain of Judas
departs cutting his kisses in two.

Delivery
realm without ramparts, only the water speaks.

The extension of my own hill into a mountain?

MOTHERHOOD

Milk

this first domestic creature.

Humble in cotton
weaving white until it becomes Pasifai
in every dimension.

The child suckles the heavy
breast
the future descends
a beardless prophet, though wise.

Touch

Before knowledge
love
a horn lodges itself in the body.

The road to the sacred wound.

NANNIES

White
looking over the high seas
no ornament, no seam,
with twenty four carat nipples.

Cambric night-dresses
gardens of milk,
a lullaby
to comfort
motherhood
deep in the polar night.

INTERNAL VISION

A knock

on the mountainous earth of my feet.
An empty answer.

I cry

the race of gold
departs from the lobes of my ears.

From the speared side
I look to the mountain.

It turns.
It can see

my eyes
kissed
in the rolling of the dice.

I knit on the elbow of the night.

If a light should appear
it will injure all my lambs.

SIDE FIRE

Byzantine

of the blue
a day of sheepskin and the sound of the horn.

I prefer to walk at night
covering
the children so they will not catch cold.

A pin cushion for pasture

looking
for lovers
icons in silver attire
they sleep.

A little more here
a little more there.

This is how the thread passes through the needle's eye.

Am I an archaic tide?

ASTERO

The loose-flowing hair of lilacs
on the borders.

She stopped and looked at them.

Standing she said 'I shall leave'.
An item
of the earth
the revelation of stone.

The house

edges close by her

a floating village, old and shrouded in mould.

Long ago

Arrarat
the hill
the stone
the pebble.

The war of velvet.
The tracks laid down
the silence above.

'Who am I', she said
and left with feet as bare as a bunch of grapes
a final offering to the doorstep.

Outside
wandering

Atlas fully in the light

the World
and Astero.

Who imprisons the mother in the cells of the breast?

CHARISMATIC COMMUNION

Prophetess of the body
in the lower regions of fruit.

A road of hay.

The chamomiles ascend
touch her womb
Ionian town
in the ninth month.

With the triangles of the astronaut
and the carols of Iolkos.

She laughs.
She bears the child.

Immaculate body.

A kingdom without ramparts. Only the water speaks.

Her milk ermine
on Pluto's shoulders?

DREAM

Inherited word

The swing moves
a fat goose
in the old furniture

a solitary planet
in two dimensions.

The velvet withdraws.
The memory fails.

Celebrations from end to end
cracking the sky in two like a branch.

She is
the one who can't be walked over
the veins bulging.

Her white tress is an imaginary horizon
which unravels.

All the earth is hers and not hers.

The darkness of her back
mourning and mistake
she presents an open hand.
Does it offer?
Does it weigh?

Veils enwrap her body
the belly made of mastika
and a cloak light-blue with smoke

with the texture of another world
stronger
than the stones which grind the wheat.

And now all is clear.
An open palm, heavily muscled arms
"Come",
she says to the young girl.

The picture develops.

The girl named Ariadne,
is prepared,
her face open as an Azalea,
a light head-band
leaving athletes with their hearts beating, her hair free,
She makes her room smaller
A cry rises, "don't".

Old breasts are adjacent,
weedy ground
catching light
in the blue of the moon
and lighting up at midday.

The picture develops.

Her fingers barely touching
she prepares to sound her tambourine lips.
He is next to her,
Theseus
with deep folds in the linen of his toga around the pelvis.

And then
the cloud which follows him

as an illusion
poured from head to waist.

What can this rain master;
What can be constructed from this aroma?

The girl looks at him.
The legends deepen,
and hurry to walk upon the earth
around the bended knee.

Near her the palm gives warning of menace
an ancient primitive gesture.

Aphrodite hovering in the gardens.

What part will lace gloves play
in the earthquake?

CHASTE BODY

If truth is unleashed what winds will it awake?

THE CEREMONY

The mother said:
"Ascend the steps".

Polished brass bannisters
below
the lions form a stone jungle.
My mind closed like drawers
on the invisible web of love.

The dance and the paradise,
I step happily on the marble,
over its most shallow folds.

I ascended.
Antarctic in all its glory

the sea

before the northern wind embraces it
and transforms it into ice.
The night of my marriage turned white
from the sugared almonds

isolated

by its love of sugar

the almond

I believe it will suffer
and
I knit
I knit
I knit

I knit
a warm arch in the golden ceilings
of the house.

Flowers in a circle,
clothes
which as they are turned moan like cows.

The old glass
touched by the wine,
by thoughts of death.

On the day of the marriage my grand-mother passed away.
Removing my necklace of pride,
my happiness

I learned how pain
brings its own ancient rhythms.

The wedding gown and the tomb.

A crooked house
rose beds in the foundations.
The old silver
the cotton clothes
with extravagant dreams.

The laurel holds the shape of a wreath
and the wedding wreathes the form of our heads.

I, the bride
the cheap canvas
and the flash

and the ceramic
never again to return to clay.

I wore a white wedding-dress,
ready to ignite,
high heels
to terrify the waifs of the world.

I, the bride
with poison in an ancient flask
preparing to take revenge.

The mind is in order

the relatives
the roof.

The sheer cliffs came later.

Crooked house
furnished
with hours
minutes
seconds.

How long does the spacing of the stars remain on the skin?

ANTISEISMIC

She said
"because life leads right"
and stretched

white inclinations to her lover.

The wind

captures the blue waves
and exonerates the pale,
barber shops dream: eau de cologne and face powder.

And then the sleep
lion of the fields
closing in on the dawn.

Look.

My grand-mother pointed out.
The things I did not live
they are the ones I hated the most
the ones I rebelled against the most.

And her coffin turned to rose
and was lost in the movement
to lilac.

WHITE MARCH

Turning
everything inside out
I refused
as if my whole life was lived
in my two pockets.

Vast wings
opened the hills on their sides.
With a straight back
waterfalls,

I will confront mirrors of the future.

A star in labour
from the new metal

I ascended.

THE SWEET BEAK

Waves
waves

the afternoon was approaching
until
it broke in my hair
like a comb.

Paris pecking
at the sleep of my belly.

Sarah with salt and roses.

THE TROPIC OF ALPHA

I believe only in citrus fruit
and in my body.

A black star
in the coat of the lioness.

Her position became vacant and grew to resemble a flower pot in the
winter.

UNORTHODOX FORM

A little more so
and
mountains mountains mountains
will draw back
for my escape.

The last luxury of my life.

DRAGGING

Coins fall from my body.

With a child in my arms
I try
to buy off the night.

HERETIC BELL-TOWER

When the light drips salt
on my homeless
shadow,

Atossa of the high roads
fingerprints on the gear levers
and the head shaven.

Who then will read the message?

Hair in dilemma
doubles the rejection.

The enthronement of sin
which I call virtue
I and being.

THE VOYAGE

A spa town
deeply cast in the moving sea.

What an hour this is.

With the echo of old festivals on the soul of the seven hills.
She said everything finds its proper time
and stepped
on the razor grass of time.

Just before the sapphire arcades turned
to unveil the pigeons,

her earrings,

shone as dragons
beneath the earth.

THE MOURNING OF SPRING

Woman of my country,
lay down All Soul's Day
for this is your right,
beyond the bars.
That the apples of reflection are three
on the wedding ring of ice.

This I became, tamed knowledge?

THE PEDIMENT

The lilies on go slow.
They hardly touch the surface of the water.

Only hands left
a lot of
flour
follows,

so the wind has never blown
as white as this.

The day arrives in black skin.

THE DINNER

Night.

Bees in the background.
Marianthe, begonia one metre high
on the big wooden table.

The twenty third of February and there is snow.

A house with sweet ferns drinking
from the seashores of Troy.

Even in its sleep the galaxy is male.

Although almost whispering she was heard
It was so quiet in the atrium
the wind came and went like a wedding ring on a finger.

This helped the Sphynx,
growing
with the silence,
in her arrival.
Small in the foliage at the outset
gigantic when she stepped to the threshold
she barely managed to get through
she was almost crushed by the rafters

where the spices
and the dyeing wool were hanging.
Something more than blue stone and sulphur,
a Byzantine landscape the refusal of her hands.
Woman.

The forests are always younger than the earth, perhaps that
is how

Black Demeter carried out her abduction
like a broad shawl
until her death.

Then the other woman

an adjacent blanket of sesame
silently lit the foliage outside
not wishing to scare motherhood's darkness
and made the following speech:

One day the mothers will take revenge,
perhaps with the apples of Winter.

It looked as if no woman believed her,
as if they had only
one arterial road.

Then she stood up.
The tulle seemed heavy to her
even heavier because of the perfumes.
She rose up
and emptied her glass
on the dome of the ceiling
she turned the river of history.

It was an omen.
We must sift the dreams
to reveal the desert sands.

The torch bearers were extinguished like candles.
Darkness on Syngrou Avenue.

Only a small curly vagrant Medusa
riding pillion on a big bike
uttered
"I believe you,
as I believe in the throttle
of this machine".

The woman of Troy was little distant from her heart.
She left with wet feet
and behind her she left a simple
a very simple dinner.
All that was consumed were two or three words.
They were mammals.

After all,
it takes a long time
for the dawn to break.

WONDER

With the high ceremonies of wheat
in the guts,

Persephone
and the hard depths of the eyes.

One wing Pilio
the other the oven of a jeweller.

What can the underworld be?

And everything up here
a carpet which never dared to fly?

EARTH AND AGAIN

Full moon in the thorns.
All was clear.
But Tiresias whispered "there can be no return to anywhere"
turning his head
understanding that seeds on the street get lost.
In the heights of his hair
were the snow-covered vineyards of Taygetos.
Among them birds flapped their wings,
pointing with their beaks at pregnant tigers,
queens of the blue waters,
pondering on the crimson of the Great Bear.

Everything came down slowly and steadily like water
to the larynx until the birds
scissored all the bridges
one by one with their tails.
So the veiled chasm revealed the new law,
the peak of its authority.
Tiresias raised his hands in calm, slow movement.
A sign of surrender, a sign of acceptance?

He sought to lay to rest the winged messages
but better still to taste them.
Of his senses, these two were left,
but the rich, proud landscapes
refused to become omens
and confined themselves only to a croak.

He She HeShe He She HeShe He She HeShe

The old man, still knowing how,
to draw ideas, from the shallow waters,
thought to himself:

"It's the last month before the trumpets,
perhaps the red will prevail over the three."
Then he heard the crack.
"The neck of the world", he said and knelt

Earth and again

He began to walk in the haze
of the earth, delving deeply into his prayers.

Earth and again

The earth surpassed his stature,
it roared as if thousands of sails
were aiding the wind to move
from place to place.
The earth whipped at his mantle,
knived the seams, sucked at his old skin
till inside his lungs it grew tender.
He leaned and turned on his regal brow.

Tiresias diminished only in stature,
found himself in the domes of clay
and walked, opening a road with his chest,
oblivious to the weight
of the high waves on the plain sea.
Near dark, when he tasted a brave shard of the earth,
the landscape changed to deep red,
reminding the old man of his first prophecies.

Earth and again

Opposite, the female voice was clearly heard
sending from her body
a terrestrial thunderstorm.

Tiresias could make nothing of her face
or her shadow.

He perceived only two oscillating pomegranates,
impressions of her breasts,
northern refugees
of the underworld.

Earth and again

And this time Tiresias bowed,
breaking all the crystal of the world with his knees,
and whatever else still fragile he hid away in his den.

All those who bravely ventured forth,
in this seventh season,
returned with the talismen
of the decisive.
Close observers claim
that the woman holding a white candle
knelt on the beach
and erased his footsteps on the sea.

Crying out "the miracle is inside us"
and suddenly her hair unravelled
in an endless stretch of emerald cloud
which rose up over the body.

This is how the rain began,
created such cataclysm that
the mannequins in the shop windows
took out their innards,
their entrails, old furniture in the sun.

Slowly he ascended.

THE RETURN TO THE WOMB

Tortoise- shell of the she-wolf
outside, the sulphur falls.
Phosphorous unsettled
by the prospect of a return.

And here she is -
sailing celestially
Nothing supports her
yet all depends on her.
Only a doe follows her,
basket in the fourth month.

Drops of the morning
break on her parapets
and descend slowly on the membrane,
with the encrypted papyrus.

Lowering
something is heard.
It is torn.
It emanates amber
amber.

Allow me to enter.

From deep within she responds,
she assumes the form of a nest,
vulnerable grass in the myths
of fire.

A pigeon flies,
the enactment of an ancient ceremony,
in its fluttering wings.

The memory of the wind
is bewitched.

Allow me to enter

A stigma is embroidered on the waters.
The sea raises its pulse,
its fish bearing light in the night of the
bait.
Fireflies carry supplication
in their glow.

Allow me to enter.

I undress,
a coronation in the kingdom of the lotus.
I try another tack, and with my mind,
launch an offensive. An attack on the light,
which by its violence always wins.

Allow me to enter.

I kneel
I gamble with the surrounding plants
with the athletic thunder
with the holy tree or the roe
which adorns the forehead of the horizon.
Outside the stars are moored
a fleet of light
awaiting the revelation of the glorious jewel.

Oh womb
mythical
archetypal
more mineral

more stony
a drop.

Wisdom exudes tenderness.
I tolerate a fainting heat
and my love deepens.

Allow me to enter.

I will free my hair,
black trumpets for the world

which, squeezed into its tight shoes,
ending with neither quiver nor rhythm,
empty from ovaried Amazons.

And where should I place my conquest?

THE ROYAL TOWN
OF
THE BALCONY

To the oxygen

THE PRECIOUS

A PRAYER

At the dawning of the world I lit a candle
and I witnessed the roots of the water
where the still immaterial flower
remained enwrapped in scales of aroma and chlorophyll.
I try to articulate both everything and nothing.
Lord, don't expect too much of my youth
for if I grow younger, I'll die.

WORSHIP

The measured words of god
twist the tangerine trees
down to the deep pools.
The armour of the earth is the seed.
A north wind blows
for everything and so much unknown.
It takes me in a vowed red dress.
I return to the blue-black thorns of wells
to be redefined once more from the outset.
Ah my close wind
with your far fetched
roarings
of the end of the world.

A RARE SPECIES

Stealing roses I kidnap shadows.
Remember me, my god
when with roses as my booty, I set off
- for where?

THE CONSECRATED BREAD

Take the crumbs seriously,
splinters of belief leading to the unanswered.
Hold faith in the yeast of the night,
to a rising of fate
which you taste as morning bread.

THE UNANSWERED

Why did you regulate my body so
to enter sun-drenched every day
in the black silk
youth of death.

CHAGRIN IS FOREMOST

When life sharpens the diamonds shine.
Those who fail to comprehend this call it chaos.
Still, accepting the lithe pebbles of god
as food in my paradise
I have something in which to trust.
The darkness prays for me.

MOVING LIKE LIGHTNING

I say here, yet beyond comprehension, I am elsewhere
but always in some situation of engagement,
for if love is lost, with it goes pain, my intimate acquaintance.
When the swallows return
the seams are torn and Winter flows through the wool.
Either with swift steps or on the wing,
but always with the grace of water,
truths swarm around me from branch to branch.
Who is their minister?
My mind becomes unhinged.

THE HIGH ENTRANCE

Amidst the sparse plexus of the world I expect
the humble, the ineffable.
Here and everywhere
for a whole life.
When you attempt to explain it the miracle is lost,
the water abused
as you coolly articulate
the rain's reading of its gospel.
I am encircled by a hell of hope,
which the miracle cannot alleviate
being familiar with the adoration of despair.
I dress in the humblest of linen
and my shoulders cry out for wings,
their edges drip the pale-blue of centuries of deprivation.
In this predicament I bow, then I rise up.
God is demanding a new virginity from me.

A HUMBLE RICHNESS

Here now is the elected one with the luxurious wounds.
But who unfurls this cloth,
this spirit of silk,
these folds that spurn all suffering
as the spawn of my innocence?
These folds that haul to their golden insides
the song of the nightingale that says,
whatever the internal paradise,
it is injurious.
Ah! the flowers embroidered from the depths of love.
The punishment fell away from me
and I wept the saintly waters of mourning.
Here where the olive trees reach out to the air,
I was called a woman again,
outside, inside, chased by birds from which I hide,
turning an abyss from my hair into vapour
burying the treasure, my wound
more regal than silence.

HER MAGICAL IMAGES

She was thinking of the bitter grass of life
and allowed her glass to overflow,
for the rain returns through the faucets
and nourishes grass within us.
As the soul entraps the Spring,
the swallow prepares to migrate
black punishment on its wings.
Over the barbaric waters
here is the domain of deep, royal red,
hit hard by hope.
The anarchist dreams of the eternal.
Dreams of an infinite moment.

THE IDOL ON MERCURY

By the edge of the room
I abandoned my neck's warm pearls to doubt.
To roll in the existence or not
of my self.
The mirror, my witness,
states that the stone of death
has not cracked me, yet.

THE RUNNERS OF PARADISE

Porcelain chinaware in the morning
with steaming coffee and a croissant.
Those still living draped in inner light
with no shadows in their words
with no panic.

Before the sphere twisted through sorrow,
masters of the powers and servants of passion.
How does it happen
that they become
the incomprehensible dragged to the West?

A DAUGHTER'S PRAYERS

This is how the earth moves,
drop by drop drifting through the dew wherever its course
may take it.

But there is no ground to scar with my running feet,
there is no violent wind to unfurl my wings.
In my clothes I move around nations of filament.
This is what I am, but I was not before,
as a young girl I ran naked in my prayers.

*

Let the angels descend from the temples
and become growers of lilies.

*

Let fragrant roses with no thorns be born.

*

Let the whole year be summer
with lizards, water-melon and open laces.

*

Let loves last for as long as they enliven.

*

Let Esmeralda of the goats tread lightly through the furrows
never awaking the dark one.

*

In the gardens she seeks her hideaways,
worlds which name no mortals.

*

Through her chambers, Paris,
as yet unformed,
seeks her, she the unseen,
whose appearance has him hand made,
her precious.

*

The bride adorned in tacit Greek.

*

Her blood hidden, her secrets profound,
lest she can't survive, possessed and humble.

THE MOTHER INSIDE

I realised so many diaphanous dreams
the world grasped me and propped me up.
Whether sworn or promised,
as if my fate was pre-destined and plausible,
I reached to the mother inside
and I extract honey from stone.
If something immortal remains within me, this is utopia.

DIPTYCH

The sailor's wife

The bride of a sailor
in a mountainous dining-room
tainted with the sleekness of the drowned,
bends to stare at the sea.
Her orphan clothes as precious as her soul
stretch to infinity,
the moment, the measure, are lost,
the last taffeta in the world.

God always sends sin

She walked down to the garden,
dark-skinned, dressed in black
to bury her future lover.
The lilies completely covered her
and she bowed in wonder.
Before the altar, her marriage wreaths no longer powerful.

CACTI IN WINTER

1

Drunk from the waters of ash
they herald the heatwave.
Aloof and haughty to a zero,
all their past in sand,
and the following days bring wide open waters of delusion.
What they believe is valuable,
that from the sands commitment emanates.

2

In the January dawn
those doomed feel no embrace,
lying in the galleys of solitude,
where the world seems twice as good.
What they know appears unknown,
not even recognising their flowers.

3

Their trap, their thorns,
and conjuring up the erasures of snowfall
as white darts from on high
that demolish those who would say
that love is unattainable.
The contrary and the barbed.
Only those, and not the rains of Spring
whose waters bring to bloom
the splendours of insufferable pain
where worlds converge.

WITH AN OLDER SOUL

THE OTHER: THE SILENT ONE

A house carved from purple stone.
brought by a sea of troubles.
Who is she who dwells within me?
Who is she whose prayer was heard?
I pass through all the chambers,
as light and water.

The four walls
and inside, flourishing, I learn slowly
that the invisible sheds its leaves.
The plaster of her dreams fall on my sheets,
the immaterial sends messages
of many lives in one.
I wear her clothes
which are without sun yet gleam in the drawers.
Some for midnight others for the dawn
but all of them for she who follows me.

I stand stiffly on the balcony
and I am encircled by mountains,
almost touched with oregano and thyme.
Further down, the patriarchal olive grove
and the sea, lighter than destiny.

THE WRITINGS OF THE MATURE

Under the volcano
in the secret house,
she re-arranges the already ordered.
All of the things un-returned by men
she offers to time, knowing they will return.

In the back-yard she sits alone
enveloped in bird-song,
she holds to the reins of the horse of chimera
in case it escapes and what she wishes will be realised.
All this will pass.

At dawn she sets off with her basket to collect the pumpkins of
god.
She bends. She gathers the fruit with an older soul than
yesterday's.

WITCH OF FATE

I sit on the steps, an ambassador of the skies.
The marble human
and opposite, the immortal mountains.
The wind comes.
The rain comes.
The sun, the moon.
Always you state new things from their beginnings.

But the homecoming of men is known
by the smoke.
A dead woman returns to the hearth,
naked hands adorned only in bracelets of water.
She touches me,
she plots a new course for the destiny of the house.
On the royal town of the balcony,
my life is shaped by the routine of god.

COUNTRY HOUSE

I will live with basil plants and pulses,
clasping my hands
I will pray for the cycle of my life to close gently.
The ceiling lower than the trees,
the front step two centimetres above
the silver driftwood of the shore.
Towards sunset at the turn of the skies
you lose your power
but gain radishes
and running water.
I step out on the balcony to take some air.
Between the door and the horizon god intervenes.

VALUABLES

Homes are not only founded on stone,
there is a touch of the vineleaf,
a touch of the lily.
They are accompanied by the olive groves
as they arch in the winds
and the horizon withdraws,
unveiling fresh new life in the moist soil.
A blind-alley opens to the strain of the march.
Way above and beyond the materials of construction
the immaterial foundations of dreams
transform the secure to the untouchable...
and save the slow continent of a house under the stars.

THE GREENHORN OF THE TRACKS

Tall, holy briar,
innocent walls cast in the light of the earth.
Houses fall like water
on known places from hidden sources.
But times turn like ships,
I arrive and stop at the door
and listen to the words of loss.
In the murderous depths of a well the tress was undone
and became a back street,
a place where dead men water cypresses.
I walk wherever my steps take me
or wherever I take them.
What still remains untamed of the dream?

FISHING FROM ABOVE

The houses are consumed,
there are tracks to the centre of the ashes
but in the night these traces are lost,
in other ways too,
coldly and respectfully
the shadows of the lamps fall on the vanished.
From one cloud of dust to the next
life and all we've loved intervenes.

A woman in a garden.
For as long as she walks all is well,
but if she tries to remain still
the fishing tackle sets in.
The world then strewn with barbs.

MAGNETS

Love cannot be drawn back, whatever you gave,
water, the leaves drank and grew.
The garden sanctified by our own hands.

A GARDEN WHICH IS NOT A GARDEN

A sacred metamorphosis beneath the light of the sun.
Where you expected a flourishing
even new growth becomes wizened.

You open the window,
the earth all around is black
as if the garden had turned ascetic.

Yet here the rose
with its many sinful leaves will rise
from an invisible dampness
in a garden which is not a garden.

SLEEPING IN THE OPEN

1

The cicadas expand the infinite
every night, one inch at a time,
I grow more humble when I sleep outdoors.
Most gentle senses,
what would beauty be without the invisible
or sound without silence?

Between the thorns and the coolness
sleep vanishes, I lose it.
On a simple balcony
I found a place of prayer
holier than an olive grove.

2

I sleep on a balcony of stars,
decent linen covers touch my body
which at dawn is thrown to the howling dogs.
The fate of the party changes easily.

THE COUPLE

Nights on the balcony in black,
as the temperate, worshipped
the full moon makes its appearance.
In former times
in a hunting drunkenness and untamed
Adam and Eve
stood under a multitude of stars,
the scapula forming a common chord.

They stayed for as long as they could bear it,
drifting in mountains and seas.
If their names are mentioned on All Souls Day
clothes fall from their hangers
in folds and creases the colour of cypresses.
I lean my elbows on the table of patience,
gouging hollows
for the future feeding of birds.

DECORATION FOR A DINNER

But what is hunger?
The royal hounds black and white
come bounding
through pits of dust
at the immobilised victim
bitten suddenly with the shiver of terror.

The blood is lost in spice and aroma,
in the brilliant illuminations of the dining - room,
in the porcelain behaviour,
the knife twelve inches from the fork.
An invisible taste offered on visible lace,
with flowers, wine and fowl.
Matter consumed by matter
until the skeleton is reached.
The rapacious awaits and defines our mortal lives.

CHERUBIC UTENSILS

Later after a light supper my mind remains clear
in the shadowy tastes of water.
What makes water so rich?
Maybe the fact that it does not demean those who drink it.
I move the plates
and the table's coherence disintegrates.

I am an instant leader
as I note that the hole in the linen
equates to our destiny.
I can say no more,
I have no further arguments
in my cherubic utensils.
Constantly I fill them
but they always empty again
and secretly
widen the cycle
awaiting the one and the only holy bread.

THE INITIATES

Everyday things guide us to the miracle.
Cleaning apples
in the light of a lamp
I discover the old age of fruit.
I am hungry, I will lead something to its loss.
Eating, I feel the common vigour
but when fasting.
I am suspended as old as the hills
and accompanied by hourless things.

A COMMON CATERER

The embroidery lingers over the table
embellishing the old trap.
Guests bearing the name of victim
will be done for like the lamb
by the omnipresent killer of us all.

A TABLE RULE

I'll taste the entire universe
in deep red vegetables.
Beneath the high points of the stars
entwined in my dark gloves
and voiceless,
the tomato in the custom of the blade.

GAME

A tap drips in the shadow of the celery.
But my soul is far away
with the water of the roof-tops
summoning the divine to earthenware.
The suspicion of a game
over a dinner of rice,
the vegetables growing much older
in the air.

RECEPTIONS

When the guests departed
I leaned into the cushions.
I looked.
What remains of the reception?
A sacrifice laid bare on my table
with the bones of hyperbole.

OF CANNIBALISM

I invite you humbly into the disorder of silk.
A buffet of delight in the garden
with cool fabrics and cold plates,
with no nightingales but a music of ribbons
to sift your dreams.
An invisible caterer in the midst of cycles of joy
in the fish
in the cereals
in the pure, infallible wine.
Calf and lamb cured in spice
beneath an unstable azure sky.

The settings are immaculate,
only the offerings in motion,
this first fortnight of August
in Attica of Pallas,
with dishes determined to be consumed,
but the new hidden quarry,
always attempting escape
though never reaching the water.
A full moon but what can we ascribe to it?

I invite you to a gentle place
though disobedient towards dawn,
where elaborately decorated victims take revenge
as babies once again
growling at the divine food.
The greenery remains, bewildered and utterly fresh,
matter with or without skin
as if never swathed in it.
God will provide but now does he appropriate?

I will receive you with a hem of coral.
And at our meeting you will devour me
beginning with my wrists.
I am bourgeoisie and will not rise up.

A VIEW OF THE MORTALS

One day my youth punished me.
My ashes were removed,
my constant dust.
I was draped in transient light
immortal in the middle of the circle.
Not so much as one button falls
from the robe of my pride,
it moves imperceptibly sometimes revealing
heaven
sometimes hell.
In this endless universe
I, the unchangeable miracle,
have a view of the mortals,
my used up materials,
polished, shiny and afraid
traversing the darkness
following the tracks of snails,
as the years multiply
fasting without even bread
from the roots of the night to the branches of dawn.
So long as it is sufficient
the world is renewed,
a drop in the waters
yet still a unique, discernible planet.

Time departs, scattered waters.
I lie in the sun.
Clouds of dust take the chance
to pay back debts,
face powder for my new-found mortality.

I move to the hot spa by the summer house,
the pains of arthritis leave like a wild animal
in the sulphur, in the salt.
I poise myself in piety, I write to myself.
I know no-one more mortal than I.

THE INACCESSIBLE

The dream
the speechless
the other
the lovers
the next moment
the jasmin
the poem
the pain
the pining

Like the chamomile
with a single dream
and less water.