

Tomaz Salamun

Colombia

Cats have set themselves on wings.
Buttons have buttercups. Hares are
soft flesh, hares are soft flesh, they
shudder and hustle. They rise the sun,
actually they hold it on little sticks fixed
in the ground. Water strengthens sticks
in silt. A pool vibrates differently from
clay. It pours itself and doesn't flow
back rhythmically. The sea is a warranty
and the curious are full of adrenalin. And
now, how are you? Is there in a membrane
in a volcano on which the tongue slides,
too? The one that calls the cells of
memory, waves the body and shrieks
when the sun wets, wets, broiling in Iška?

*Translated from the Slovenian
by Phillis Levin and Tomaz Salamun*

TOMAZ SALAMUN

The Car

The car is greasy. Blinkers in sleeves
rush. The trees crystallize, their juice
puts the blinker at odds. There are snails,
and snails trod on in history. The dead,
and those whose mouth we stretch.
The juice costs. The mower reaches
for a loan. Can I grab your tail and put you
on the bus? In big cities people don't walk
bent over. Yesterday I saw a gunned-down
cabdriver. On Third Avenue, at 31st
Street. People stopped reading.
The younger ones were alarmed. The police
were so alert as if they'd been up all night.
The air in the bus started to freshen.

*Translated from the Slovenian
by Phillis Levin and Tomaz Salamun*

TOMAZ SALAMUN

You're at Home Here

I learn lungs. I go nowhere. I stare at the edge
of a white mountain. I want to die. The trail makes
money. I now can occupy a post of power
and give the tent away. They punctured the song,
the food, the sea. They dressed themselves in white
histories. He wasn't raucous, who didn't know, a seal
closed up the wounds and battlements.
The motif is beautiful. The elephant has no ground,
it spins vases and the girls inside them.
It pours itself on a cup, on coffee; an airplane
kneels on the overgrown grass. It's not my bread.
The bread's all yours. It adorns itself with claws.
Jump into the factory of rugged flags and
stretch the edge. Fall asleep with the stretched edge.

*Translated from the Slovenian
by Phillis Levin and Tomaz Salamun*