



**Marion Poschmann**

**Nimbus**

Poems

(Original German title: Nimbus. Gedichte)

115 pages, Clothbound

Publication date: 17 February 2020

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pp. 9; 93 – 98; 109

*The monstrous has many forms,  
and nothing is more monstrous than man.*

Sophocles, *Antigone*

**And treasured snow in my warm hands**

Just yesterday I was tarrying in snow-covered  
mountains. Now they have been razed,  
dissolved, so easily, like when someone  
defrosts a refrigerator. I saw water flowing,  
saw the ice break in chunks from the walls,  
everything fell into the valley and became  
liquid, became valley, and became nothing.

Only yesterday I was worshipping mountains.  
I bought postcards, sent them  
to myself, homeward, as a memento  
of the work of destruction I have done here,  
I thawed Greenland with my gaze,  
I melted the glaciers as I flew over them

with devotion. Nothing is

beyond desire, they say, and where there is a will,  
there is a way, to make the thin air  
subservient, to conquer the monstrous,  
the most monstrous,  
so easily, as if one were sleeping in an armchair  
and just dreaming of a long flight.

## **Imaginary Dialogues**

What drifts up to me: the homage to lounges on trains.

A whole country seen through dusty drapes,

excited electric rays. Purposeless rage, wavering

in the draft. Blown out of proportion every now and then. Time after time

the power of wordless outrage recharges

this synthetic fabric. First blows dealt.

Blow upon blow. Logs upon logs. The endless

numbers of railway sleepers. Finally falling asleep. Felling

birches. Birches upon birches. Building tracks.

The empty years hanging in the curtains.

Forever a low-level levitation, gazing

at the imminent, the potential snow. But

just wait, soon your blinds will also deny you

the solace of pendular motion. Woe! Whirling

world! Full of wistfulness and far, so far from Europe.

And yet. We are nowhere near Vladivostok.

## **Ice skating (with Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock)**

- carved by steel blades, tusks, entwined,  
and further scratched over the years by school groups -

I trace over woolly mammoths  
in the frozen surface, tender

trunks, blown fur, a grid  
of engravings, graffiti, the chill curtains of a

too much and a too little – how the ice clangs! – how the  
crystal rings! – each hair presented distinctly!

Bristles, floor-length, ivory – how do you want  
to overwrite megafauna this time? A skimming

of wind on the lake, striding over phantom paperwork  
- how you sail! How the cold tweaks the eyelids.

The old companion animals follow suit with artful twirls,  
Rilke's carriage horses, Celan's felt swans, Steller's

sea cow. On the edge of the Baikal-Amur Mainline,  
I sketch Trans-Sib tigers in iron and ice.

## **Ice hole dive**

Thus the shocking moonlight came down into the valley, imbued  
the mountain of crumpled towels with its dignity,

deepened the shadows (fall-of-the-folds study), I set out  
to draw everything, to capture precisely that moment

when the cold plunge seized me  
with its force. Baikal-Energia, shock effect:

fell into a state of strange intelligence.  
Sea snow flows in fine particles through the picture.

Here a Baikal seal rolls through the water, deemed  
a sheer fat ball, although not very tasty. Not exactly

orb shaped, and yet the Steller's  
sea cow is clearly fattened up, we recall. How they

mourn their mate, pulping algae with their teeth per omnia  
saecula saeculorum. We will never meet them

again, that's grim realism. Seal oil  
is still available, though. Blubber. Train oil. Trance.

## **Cryptodepression**

In the hotel's glacier bed. Thermal water flows  
out from behind the tiles, thawing what had been hidden in the block of ice

over the years, preserved clouds that persevered  
in their suspended state. Someone

made the effort of heaving them into this tub,  
and I let in water until the room eventually fogs up.

Snowy drapes, wound together, I lie  
enshrouded, mummy in her trough valley, I have

banished the ghosts who previously inhabited the room,  
in a state of ecstasy. There they wait, wringing their hands and trembling,

for the water to cool. You can still see them,  
unearthly shimmering bodies on soapy films.

I bathe in a brew of juniper berries, in residual snow,  
foam chrysanthemums. I wanted to be a whirlwind

without feet. I wanted to understand the curtains  
that blow across the neon signs at train stations.

## Whiteout

Snow falls down facades. Along walls  
that do not work. Against futuristic apartment blocks

on stilts. Snow clouds considered, filtered,  
through the curtains. No longer wanting to please

this place. Go bury objects,  
entomb empty plastic bottles, finally lay to rest

the plush pillows, as the ritual demands.  
Mattress mounds, the snow-covered backs of kurgans,

burial objects: four car tires. No one can see how cold  
it really is. Exhale animals.

Bright swans drifting up toward the sky. Silver  
circus tigers crashing through a paper wall.

Exhale animals, swift, fly-away  
sheep, the old stock. Puffed out, fading

animals that can cope with defeat.  
Now and then, a white elephant.

## Sheet ride

The Siberian tiger and his shrunken  
range. The reason for this is the loss of the

Korean pine, whose seeds supply the nourishment for all  
northern tigers, mediated by wild boar.

I am lying in the compartment under the sheets and hurtling  
inwards, into the night, crossing an infinite number

of time zones. The light from the train shows  
a flip book of tree trunks, leafing past, strips

disclosing the expanse. Far from. Very far away from.  
Lying with the tiger. Close to temperatures

of sublime depths, which increase one's fortitude  
above its usual mediocrity.

Feel his breath in the rattling of the train,  
decipher his markings in the forest pattern, pattern forest,

that trembles within me because I'm transcending a taboo,  
along rails to the margins, to the thresholds of sleep.

## Hypnopomp

Saving the world's climate via  
the spirit of the German ode -  
that's setting ourselves  
quite a task, isn't it?

we who chiefly play  
with foil wrappers,  
value whispery globules,  
compressed

into pearls,  
seeing flying globules gliding  
utterly lost in ourselves,  
the soul at the centre of their movement,

immerse ourselves in doilies,  
in the glint of our own fingers,  
the dental crown of laughing aunties, descend into  
white balance adjustment, grey standard, reference values –

\*

when I went around as a yolk, I wore a dress  
of sticky albumen that yielded to unfamiliar touch,  
I was a promenading egg without a shell,  
which required a feat of incubation.

Passers-by always came too close, that's how it is  
with a clearly enlarged aura, kisses here,  
kisses there, for strawberry meringue, whisk the white of an egg  
until stiff peaks form. and yes,

I certainty stiffened when sucked on  
cigarette butts lay on the street, they clung on  
and I dragged them into the night,  
appeared to you in a nimbus of filters,

that's how it was back then, blancmange advertisements, baking powder,  
cake ingredients filled the streets as soon as the  
control body slacked off, and me always in a

thinker's pose, a dream log of inwardness –

\*

in my lifetime 60% of the  
vertebrates living in the wild have disappeared.  
and those who have been, see themselves from a distance  
and cannot make themselves understood to anyone,

they read travel timetables, labels. I will quote from  
the last loaf of bread I bought, it carried  
a slogan: we wandered around  
for a long time.