

Sigrid Kingma

Boatsjes

Heit learde ús
earlik en iepen as in grêfkiste
oer libben en stjerren
hy hat in skoft
foar stienhouwerij Cuperus wurke
fertelde er middeis
by de tee en
bastonje of spekulaaske

Hûndert gûne koe er fertsjinje
as er yn plak
fan twa deagravers
nei ûnder gong
de famyljekelder yn
dêr't de kisten as boatsjes
lâns knibbels farren

Deeglik hout
gewoane deadskisten
rotsje al nei in pear wiken

Ik fielde my grut
en sterk dat heit
sokke kennis mei my dielde
rjochte de rêch
kin omheech sei ik stielich

'Heit,
as ik dea bin
meist my net begrave.'

Oersetting: Rachel Plummer

Small Boats

Father thought us
honest, open as a coffin
about living and dying
For a while he had worked
for the local gravestone mason
or so he told us that afternoon
over tea and
gingerbread, or maybe biscuits

A hundred guilder could be earned
if he took the place of
two grave diggers
lowering himself
into a certain family tomb
where the kists, like small boats
floated knee high

Decent wood.
Most coffins
rot within weeks.

I felt big
and strong, that father
shared such wisdom with me.
I stood up straight
chin held high, and declared

"Father,
when I die
you may not bury me."

Rachel Plummer

Selkie

The secret me is a boy.

He takes girliness off like a sealskin:
something that never sat right on his shoulders.

The secret me is broad-shouldered;
the sea can't contain him,

the land can't anchor his waves
to its sand.

The secret me swims
with the big fish, brash, he swaggers

like a mermaid, bares teeth
like daggers, barks at the moon when it's thin.

He's whiskered, that boy. Thick-skinned.
Quick-finned, always turning tail.

He wears his own skin like a sail,
lets it carry him to where

salt swallows mouthfuls of air.
Let them find me there by the shore:

the girl-seal with a secret
boy inside. Rough-voiced. Black-eyed.

Washed bare
as the beach by the tide.

Oersetting: Geart Tigchelaar

Selky

Yn it geheim bin ik in jonge,

dy't famkeswêzen ôfstrûpt as in seehûnehûd:
eat dat him nea goed om 'e skouders sitten hat.

Yn it geheim is er breedskouderich;
de see kin him net hâlde,

it lân kin syn weagen net ferankerje
yn it sân.

Yn it geheim swimt er
mei de grutte fisken, brekber, hy swaait

as in seemearmin, ûntbleatet toskten
as dolken, blaft nei de moanne as dy tin is.

Hy hat snorhier, dy jonge. Tsjokhûdich.
Fluch as in fin, altyd sturtswyljend.

Hy draacht syn eigen hûd as in seil,
lit it him meinimme nei wêr't

sâlt mûlfollen lucht opslokt.
Lit harren my dêr by de kust fine:

de wyfkes-seehûn mei in geheime
jonge yn har. Rûge stim. Blau each.

Bleatwosken
as it strân troch de tij.

Geart Tigchelaar

projeksje

it binne net al dyn klisjees
of de dingen dy'tst dochst

foar my of foar in oar

it is it lûd fan de waarmte
as ús beide neakene liven

lizze sûnder ferweech
neat rest ús noch te stjerren

âlde projektor fan rommelmerk
ferdwynst yn it swart en wyt
mei it tal dia's fierstente koart

neakener lis ik no
rjochtsje hierkes har

yn it wite ljocht snijt it stof
as in tûzen sneedsjes

oant de dea of de sliep
einlings derop folget

of it moat sa wêze
dat de kat op bêd springt

Oersetting: Stewart Sanderson

projecting

it isn't all your clichés
or the things you do

for me or another

but the sound of warmth
when our naked bodies

lie motionless
nothing left to us but dying

old projector from the market
you fade out in the black and white
of so few slides

now I lie more naked
my hair stands up on end

in the white light the dust flickers
with a thousand cuts

till death or sleep
follows at last

or as it might be the cat
jumping up onto the bed

Stewart Sanderson

The Edge of Things

These hills are endlessly debatable:
a brokenness of moorland, moss and mire
through which a thin line runs, invisible
as faith, or buried fibre optic wire.

Between two nations in one parlous state
the fracture yawns: a faded watermark
my eyes can't follow through these desolate
high pastures – thread unspooling in the dark.

This landscape has hard names: Sourhope and Schil,
Staerough, Black Hags Rigg and Crookedshaws.
To me, these words mean something beautiful –
the wind's fanfare, the rain's lonely applause.

From Cheviot, I squint at Hownam Rings.
I'll take my stand here, on the edge of things.

Oersetting: Sigrid Kingma

De Râne fan Dingen

Dizze heuvels binne einleas út lykwicht:
in brek fan heide, mosk en mied'
dêr't in tinne line troch rint, út sicht
as leauwen, of begroeven glêsfzeltried.

Tusken twa naasjes yn ien nuodlike steat
gappet de fraktuer: in fuortfage wettermerk
folgje myn eagen net troch dat bleat
heech greidelân – tried ôfroljend yn it swarte swerk

Dit lânskip hat hurde nammen: Soerhoop en Skoais
Stjerûch, Swartwiifs Túch en Krûmslappen.
Foar my betsjutte dy wurden wat moais –
de wyn syn fanfare, de rein syn iensum klappen.

Fan Sefjot dikerje ik nei Hoenaams Ringen.
Ik nim myn stânpunt hjir, oan de râne fan dingen.

Stewart Sanderson

Leaving Europe

Hauling Hôtel Cheillon's
front door shut behind me
I stepped out
into the falling snow

and as Grez turned
white as an untouched
sheet of paper
started printing my way home.

Oersetting: Geart Tigchelaar

Europa ferlitte

Ik luts Hôtel Cheillon's
foardoar efter my ticht
stapte nei bûten
yn de fallende snie

en sa't Grez draaide
wyt as in net oanrekke
fel papier
printe ik myn paad nei hûs.

Geart Tigchelaar

who will save our souls

as wy it net dogge
binne jimme it dan

dû bedoelst net ien
hoecht it te dwaan

hast gelyk ast seist
wêr lizze de grinzen

fan bekroadzjen oant
it ús saken net binne

as ik no sis dat wy
allegear feroardiele
ta dizze wrâld en wy
allegear ta deselde
soarte hearre en net
ta soarten mei elk
har ryk ferskaat en
fral ûngelikensens

nee man wy sitte hjir
ferdomd ien foar ien
op deselde ierdkloot
jim mem dy net ferteld
klisjees yn sokke tiden
fan apaty klibjen bliuwe
as lytse soalprinten yn
fuortrûn oarlochsgebiet

grins fan bekroadzjen
en binne ús saken net
it altiten op 'e nij ikerjen
is teminsten noch better
as de grinzen fersierd
mei ljocht en kramtried

Oersetting: Rachel Plummer

who will save our souls

if not us
will you

you say no one
has to do it

you're right to question
where we should draw the line

between sympathy
and not-my-problem

but what if I told you
we're all condemned
to the Earth and that
we all belong
to the same species not
to different races each
with their own unique
inequalities

no man we all live here
every damn one of us
on the same fucking planet
didn't your mama tell you
that in times of apathy
platitudes stick
like the war zones's
small sole prints

the boundary between sympathy
and not-my-problem
always drawn and redrawn
is at least better
than stringing the border
with lights and barbed wire

Rachel Plummer

The Iron Children

Along our street the iron children come,
cast and wrought. The road rings like a struck
cymbal below their clanging feet. For luck
we clank our coins into their mouths, all dumb
as metal, hear them rattle down and thrum
the stainless engines deep inside each quick
gullet. They flood the street with blood-smell, thick
as rust; church bell faces. What will become
of the mother carrying her iron child
inside of her, a silver pear to weigh
her down? Pot-bellied, saucepan-bellied. Thirsting
for the iron monger's ore, her child
hungry. Its metal, melted down, would pay
a heavy debt, or fill a womb to bursting.

Oersetting: Sigrid Kingma

De izeren bern

Lâns ús strjitte komme de bern fan izer,
getten en smijd. De dyk galmet as in slein
bekken ûnder har droanjende fuotten. Foar seine
rinkje wy ús munten yn har mûlen, net wizer
as metaal, hear se delratteljen en tromjen op
de rustfrijstielen moters djip yn eltse rappe
kiel. Se oerspiele de strjitten mei bloedstank, pappich
as rust; tsjerkebellehollen. Wa heart de rop
fan de dragende mem har izeren bern
yn harsels, in sulveren par as blok
oan de foet? Pannebúk, pannekoek. Lokke
troch de izerhanneler's erts, har bern
roppich. Syn metaal fereffenet smolten sok
in grutte skuld, of soe in limoer te barsten klokke.

Sigrid Kingma

Thúskomme

en it is as wachtsje
de roazen op wetter
dat ik pars út myn longen
wei en datsto tochtest
dat ik woe
en ik woe datsto
tocht ik dat juster noch
de faas healfol
en de kontener leech
en wy foar ien kear
gjin wask
inkeld it draaien
en de reade ljochtsjes
fan klear

Oersetting: Stewart Sanderson

Homecoming

and it is as though the roses
wait for water
I press from my lungs
and that you thought
that I wanted
and I wanted that you
yesterday I still thought
the vase was still half-full
and the wheelie bin empty
and we for once
no laundry
only the spinning
and the wee red lights
when it ends