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## Corridors

1979/(1982)

long hospital corridors

arrival

behind the glass she stood there  
thin and fragile  
behind thick panes of glass  
thin  
thin she was  
with a broad smile  
eyes full of love and longing  
what does she want

I searched among the suitcases  
until I found my own

she waved to me

she waved with the hands  
which had ones caressed my face  
the hands which longed so much to be tender  
but did not know how

kissing the cheek of the woman journalist  
who had followed me from Frankfurt  
I said hello

how unhappy she is the Jewish woman

I clasped the slight body of her which said  
that she was my mother my mother  
the land whose hot breath she blew into me

car  
we squeezed ourselves into the car

windows glided past the landscape  
scenery of dust and noise  
people said hello and how are you  
and I recognized them  
a thin mother touches my body

my body not once  
I keep my eyes closed  
years fly past  
one hair at a time turns grey

my father said  
look  
go and look  
you've got nothing to lose

and these are the cross-roads  
and these are the years that never stops  
passing

and all that time I wanted to go home  
home  
uniform dust and sand  
I wanted to go home

hospitals have long corridors  
endlessly long corridors have hospitals  
dreadfully long  
the corridor of a hospital  
they have computers there  
big computers  
for day and for night  
they guard  
the number of the sickness  
the number of the sick  
the number of the name

arrival full of anticipation  
some people die there  
depart  
for their own world  
the computer writes dead

and he my friend  
he was on duty that night

he showed me that paper  
the paper was very long  
with a flowing line  
what is it I asked  
his hand touched my hand  
he died  
my father

he passed on

they said it was for the best  
watching someone suffer like that  
he screamed  
he screamed out  
the pain of all pains

what is he on about

I wrote my name on the death contract  
they gave me a paper bag with the remains  
a watch a pen  
in my haste I forgot to say goodbye  
nor did I say au revoir  
I walked quickly very quickly along the corridors

I went home

soldier in soldier's heaven  
he'd do better to forget it

heart game

in an earlier part of my life  
I was right where I shouldn't have been  
in the same place I learned to read and write  
where I failed to read and could not write

a mother a child  
a war a death

my father was 31 when I was born  
I was 31 when he died

whales no they don't interest me

the man sits down on the ground  
nestles his tired body  
in the angle of the beds  
wasn't that a bit premature  
he was the son who wondered why  
why he'd never talked with him before  
he looked at the blue sheen of his hair  
the day I lost my new coat  
my mother condemned me to loneliness  
for life

she was so angry  
that I lost my new coat that day  
my father would come to my rescue  
I opened my eyes  
have you read Moby Dick  
he knows perfectly well that I've read Moby Dick  
the blue-haired man stops my thoughts  
wandering with his rambling on about whales

there is always something funny about moments like this  
I am no longer capable of telling the fantasy  
from the story  
here's to you old man

I look through the barrel of the gun  
I'm not expecting all the fun of the fair  
who said that the last days  
of Pompeii were all beer and skittles  
I still can't find the words  
when my days comes  
I'll buy myself a country  
I'll be everything I can be  
please don't wake me  
I only want to dream

while straddling my legs as wide as possible  
I think off  
the red cherries which I gathered  
on the way home

I opened my eyes I give up

snapshot  
she saw the body of a man  
it was vaguely familiar to me  
as so often in dreams  
he came riding on his old warhorse  
bought at an auction  
all saints make impossible friends

next great leap forward

if you are asked to go back  
through your memories  
or if you are asked  
to throw away your keys  
don't hesitate

next great leap forward  
history which makes history  
for the protection of your personal freedom  
and those of your fellow travelers  
and he my friend  
he was not fast enough

a bullet bored through his head  
and it told him nothing  
but a fragment of memory  
they waited 31 days  
on his birthday they managed  
to bury him what a great leap forward  
it would be easier for everyone  
if they'd only grasp that there will be a slight delay  
in embarking  
and have at least a couple of anecdotes ready  
for when they arrive  
the best thing about war is  
that you do it with friends  
it gives you such a warm feeling when you hit the target  
we shake hands  
even before he'd finished speaking  
he ran out of the trench  
a few words too soon  
the rest was written on his breath

I read the paper there he was  
yesterday's dead soldier

I got home late  
I was afraid  
everyone was afraid  
we died a thousand deaths  
I shall come again  
the coast vanishes  
he was already gone  
but a child vanished in the sea

time to go  
I say I'll see him again  
and he looked at me  
as if I would never see him again  
after a while I saw him  
clambering up the path  
his camouflage shirt flapping about his hips

he acted as if he hadn't heard  
what he'd just said

they don't turn back though some would like to  
he knows that war is not the proper place  
to think

it is time  
to say goodbye see you soon  
we shake hands  
as if I would never see him again  
I was alone  
on that godforsaken hot road  
on the way home  
no-one

Mummy never cries

with the darkness came night and cold  
they gave me a room and forgot the blanket  
I covered myself with newspaper  
he was in the paper  
but tomorrow I'll be home  
I stood up  
what a view  
everything went up in flames  
I didn't help I was on leave

tomorrow I'll be home

I met this man today  
whenever I'm depressed I buy flowers  
what an odd thing to do  
how peculiar  
why do I do that  
beauty doesn't last  
I wanted to pay but the man had vanished  
what's going on  
why can't I see the beauty of flowers

when I'm covered with them  
my eyes closed  
years flew by and I wanted to go home  
had forgotten to say goodbye  
nor had I said au revoir

I know that I'm alive  
because through my blood-filled eyes  
I see trees  
swirling leaves  
fall on me  
one on each eye

I saw a woman pregnant with a war child  
it moves its head  
at night she watches glow-worms

I exist  
thanks to a small window  
with not much of a view  
old and wrinkled  
the paint flakes away  
and I  
I watch the children playing  
further down the street  
once I was at home there  
every afternoon I go and collect the food  
that my aunt cooked  
she's getting fatter and fatter  
why should I worry about why she never remarried

today I'm burning all the photographs  
to mark this day

so the war passed  
as all things pass  
a housewife like my mother must wonder  
if this noise is all there is to it

today the walls are covered with graffiti

I wanted to tell my mother about it  
her tears streamed over my face

I smile at a glass windowpane  
that's where they were

today he is a tree and I am a flower  
I pick the flower on the mountain that is me

hearing the brass bands playing so many years  
it is my turn to learn  
that the war is behind me

we squeezed into my uncle's car  
I know the history of my star now  
first I had to hold him up  
later I had to push him in a wheelchair  
and then the memory  
walking man with no head  
walking body with no man

so I grew old

while my father grew younger

always people at the door

no-one really came to see us

a man carries a child  
wounded in an artillery attack  
not this child  
not this man  
but  
I have seen the holy temples

the dying oasis of a vanished land

every year I am born anew  
in the ninth month  
my mother groans less loudly  
while each year my groans  
sound more anguished  
an old fool will never believe that  
I give my story my own voice  
my own speechless voice  
in the midst of the crowd  
to the last drop of ink

adieu

flowers and babies  
that's my address  
a picture on the wall

I got up in my new sheet of old news  
after that I slept through the noise for two days

what for example should I make of my portrait



I look so relaxed in it  
I think I'll send everyone a copy  
can I still get out of the limousine  
to complete the journey by bus  
the child hiccups  
while a pain settles in mother's anus  
gently  
gently  
no-one used to come on her birthday  
people cross the street  
a soldier shoots narrowly missing their heads  
the child hiccups on  
always good for a laugh

I am calm among the memories of gunfire  
a dying friend his brains in my hand

the war passed as all things passed

then there was the day  
we tried to have a vision  
we organized a huge banquet  
wine and all  
and so it happened that the chandelier  
fell into the soup  
which splattered over the startled faces  
I still like to revolve  
that scene in my mind

in the distance I saw a man walking with an umbrella  
I was covered with soup

gorgeous lady

touches her breasts and thinks  
of a walk in the rain

the room is empty or almost empty  
a couple of chairs  
a bookcase  
and by the window an open diary  
holes in the wall  
her eyes  
that long hair

and I see myself sitting there  
I don't want to be a wasted life

as that moment the firing stops  
the officer reports the losses

well then the day breaks  
and I had to get some sleep

once more I didn't know for a moment where I was

I lit a dream  
clowns and madmen can't do more than that  
I hiccup past a worried soldier  
along the roads which alas I have to take

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