

My Grandmother

Became a grandmother
Old, ailing,
From walk it
Get tired.
Grabam pilot
I will soon I
Plant a tree
In the plane.
Not will rock it
Will not cacino her,
Rest it
Finally.
Tell grandma:
"Ah Yes my granddaughters,
Ah Yes my pilot!
Well done!"

My Grandmother II

I with his grandmother
've been friends a long time ago.
It all diversions
With me at the same time.
I don't know boredom,
And all I wished for it.
But grandma's hands
Love only stronger.
Oh, how many hands these
Wonderful do!
Patch, knit, mark,
What they make.
So thick smear foam,
So thick pour Mac,
So roughly rubbed steps
Caress gently.
Prompt - see
Ready all day long
They dance in the trough,
To hang around the pantry.

The evening will come - shadows
Weave on the wall
And fairy-tale-dreams
Tell me.
To sleep the night light will Shine -
And then suddenly fell silent.
Smarter than them there is no
And there is no kinder to the hands.

Perhaps

Perhaps you became so small, Armenia,
So we could carry you in our hearts.
Perhaps you changed into charred parchment
So we would tremble lest you fall apart.
Perhaps your handful of soil is meant
As talisman, lesson and exercise.
Your name became the symbol, perhaps,
For purification in a world of lies.

The Love To Motherland

They bottomless – deeps of the love of each mother,
Therefore this love's highly praised.
But, a she-bear loves her children, rather, --
Her silly and clumsy cubs.
Bright is the loving hearts' clear fire,
And sore is the parting wind.
But he-dove, too, falls in sadness, entire,
Losing his girl-friend behind.
But, such a love is in men' hearts boiling
Which nature's not able to rise:
It is the light of the motherland's calling –
The light of the parental hearth.
No, not the blood or instinct, wild and bared,
Drove men to these heights above.
Long was the way of the kids of the planet
In search for this crystal love...

The Walnut Tree *(to the diaspora)*

There is a walnut tree
growing in the vineyard
at the very edge of the world.
My people, you are like
that huge ancient tree
with branches blessed by the graces
but sprawling
over the small corner of land,
roots and arms spread out
and spilling your fruit
to nourish foreign souls.

For Maria Petrovich
(her Russian translator)

No one to help carry this burden down.
No one to sort the right and wrong.
Only you, who wept Armenian tears
could translate my sorrow to song.

Our Love

Because you are not truly ours,
yet ours, we love you
with a lover's love,
Armenian world.
Ours, the way the blood
coursing our veins
is ours,
and not ours the way
the sun crowning Ararat it
unowned.
Unownable as
the manna settling
on the Sassoun woods,
unpossessed as the wind
that strokes the field
of Moush, unheld.
You are near enough
for us to hear the beat
of your heart, almost feel it,
under our rough hand,

and separated by borders
you are distant,
rising like the cathedral
of Ani out of red ruins.
O the unholdable mirage,
we reach endlessly
while you leave endlessly
to go away.
Not with a household
family love
but with a lover's grieving
we love you,
Armenian world,
Armenian soil.

Far From Home

The language of love
is the same in each land.
"I love you" even in Armenian
you understand.
But my sudden homesickness
I cannot translate
how I miss Armenia's stones
in this festive place.
For you – Ararat is biblical,
Noah's mountain alone.
For us – cradle and gravestone,
breath, joy and pain.
The century old sorrow
that flows in our blood –
even told in your own tongue
remains unexplained.

If I Don't Love You

If I don't love you, (and I don't love you),
why is winter so much like spring this year
and why is the pale sun blazing such heat
and why does the overcast sky seem so clear?
If you don't love me (and you don't love me)
then why do the passers-by float by

on your street with such strange smiles and
why don't the houses and sidewalks stay in place?
If I don't love you and you don't love me
then why was this warring world gentled
and why do the stars suddenly scorch the sky?

Come Back Safely

Even to say good-bye
even if it's the last time
even reluctantly
even to hurt me again
even with the harsh acid
of sarcasm that stings
even with a new kind of pain
even fresh from the embrace
of another. Come back, just come back.

Autumn

Like grapes of late autumn
overlooked by the harvesters' eyes
you sweeten like raisins,
like gold incense, sun dried.
Purified by rare light
freed from harvest and tax
you store the sun's heat,
you eat the cold frost.
You who outlasted spring's
flowering, summer's fruit
to be plowed back to earth, wild
autumn songs of dry, wiry root.

Words For My Child

(excerpt)

With this sweet spring
of melting brooks
and waking buds and birds
my little son begins to speak
his first Armenian words
softening the air

with ancient speech
rejuvenated on his tongue
like communion blessing us,
his first words have sprung.
The treasure
I pass along to him,
holy jewels of our race,
fashioned by light of old stars,
syllables that mark our place,
like Haig's arrow
flying through time
shaped like St. Mesrob's art
into script and history
making light of dark,
kept as balm to heal
the exile's wounded heart,
cheers the soldier
on the field; and joins those torn apart.
This language my young mother sang
in lullabies to me
has reached, my son, to you.
Keep it refreshed, made new.
Protect it as you'd protect me
from any cut or wrong.
Keep it, my son. Forget your mother
before forgetting your mother tongue.

Warmth

I walk lighting the street
with your fire.
You burn too, but with hers.
I ache for, laugh with,
lean towards your words.
You bend too, but to hers.
On the inside of my dream
is your face. On the inside
of your dream is hers.
That's it. That's life.
Let's live it loving.
Let the world turn
not remembering us,

me, with your fire,
you with hers.

Armenian Eyes

Wherever the place, in whatever face
you are unmistakable, Armenian eyes,
uniquely shaped, uniquely sized,
always recognizable, Armenian eyes.
How could you survive
what Armenian eyes have seen,
how could you stay open
where Armenians have been
and remain as you have,
both gentle and mild?
I am always amazed at
your tranquility, Armenian eyes.

When The Telephone Rings And No One Answers

There are a thousand kinds of sighs,
shrill, bass,
pressed from water,
from lungs,
pressed from stones, trees, and winds.
And as if there weren't enough moaning,
men stretched metal wires house to house
so that the ring of a telephone
can interrupt the laughter
in a room, while in another place
a hopeless girl drops the receiver
into its cradle and her head
into a deaf pillow.

What I Notice

You ignite it, hold it lightly, as if to show something about us you want me to know.
You exhale warmth that would burn me, flicking ash, breathing slowly,
out of habit, just to pass time, alleviating boredom.
You don't inhale but put it down to forget and fail to finish, smoking only part of each cigarette.

In the Sevan Mountains

Alone, and spun in spills of sunshine,
I stood astride the hush of Sevan's hills:
high, so high that an eagle
tipped my shoulder with his wing
while I stood whorled in scud-mist.
And the world looked mighty, mighty and endless.
Then, in a moment, unseeing the slow, still space,
I looked down - at a small house,
and tracks along a rutted slope -
And I needed people.