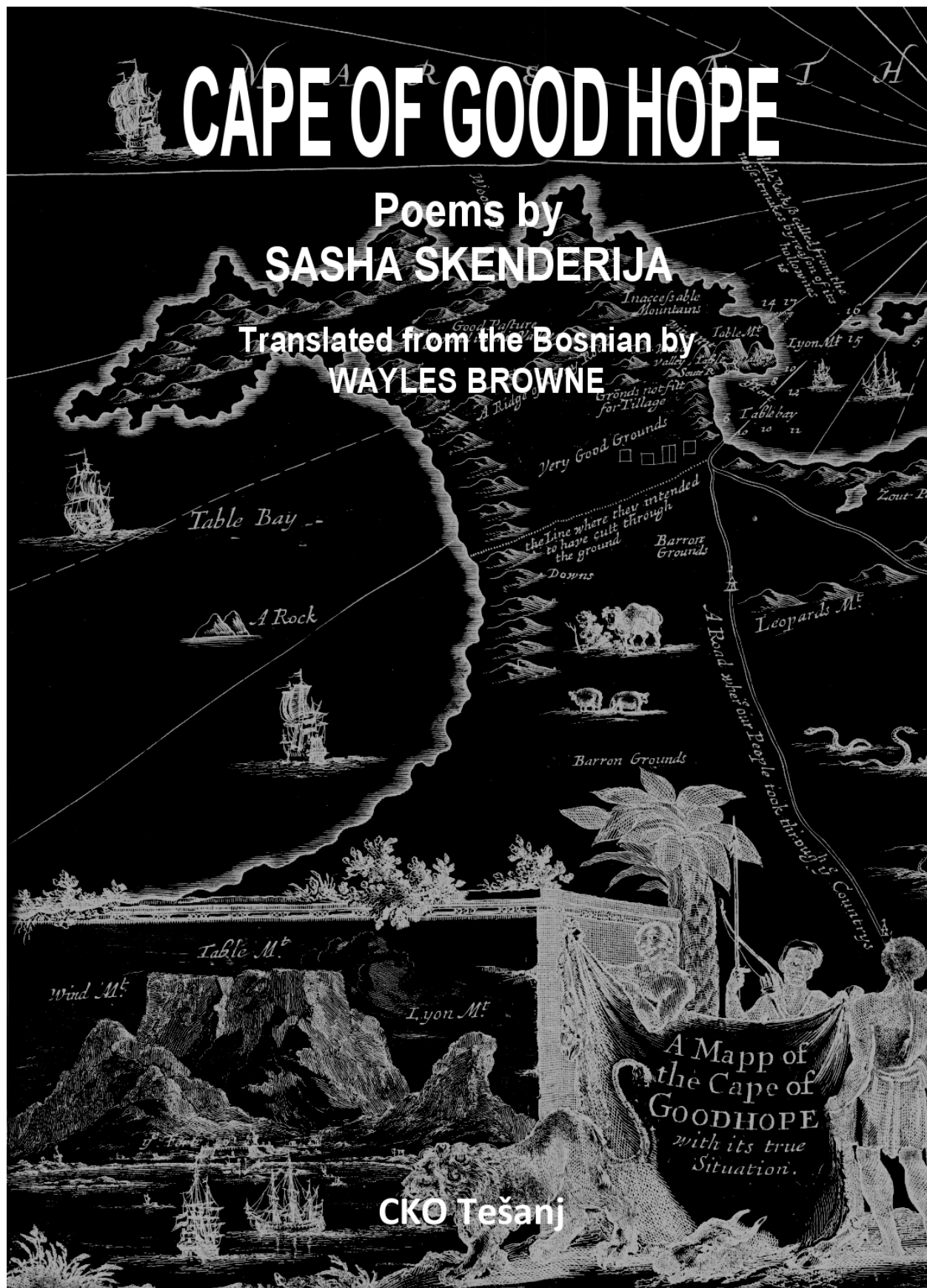


# CAPE OF GOOD HOPE

Poems by  
**SASHA SKENDERIJA**

Translated from the Bosnian by  
**WAYLES BROWNE**



CKO Tešanj

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## **Ithaka, ten years after**

*Keep Ithaka always in your mind.  
Arriving there is what you're destined for.*  
Constantine Cavafy, *ITHAKA* (1911)

Apart from those who perished on the path  
and those who are still seeking,  
we all have found her. Some crossed  
half the world, others ran into her along the way.  
She eventually showed herself even to those  
who never left their thresholds behind.  
And does it really matter any more  
whether it was providence or chance  
that brought us this far?  
Nothing short of a miracle  
will deliver us from her now.

*Ithaca, NY (2010)*

## Cape of Good Hope

I promised Zelkida  
To bring a poem  
From the edge of the world  
From the Cape of Good Hope  
Though she hadn't  
Asked me to

In the plane I was reading a book  
Written by Amir B.  
The Bosnian  
A man who  
Unlike me stayed  
And put up by himself  
A grave marker to his father  
Then he wrote a poem about it  
What a poem!  
I never met him  
But a short time ago  
He sent me two of his books  
To America  
One he signed *In friendship*  
And the other *With respect*  
Reason enough  
To take his books  
With me to the edge of the world

A woman on the seat next to me  
Asked me with curiosity  
What language that was  
That I was reading the book in  
I answered BOSNIAN  
*Aha* she said uncomfortably  
*We have Bosnians here too*  
*In South Africa*

We landed in Cape Town at dusk  
The most dizzying sight I've ever seen

The hotel room was cramped  
In a one-time prison for bank robbers  
A window part way open and a storm every little while  
Then calm again  
I left the TV on  
Since I was frightened alone at the edge of the world

In the dark of the cell  
Soft-core porn on Channel 6

In the middle of the night I woke up and shut it off:  
*I went out into the world to rest a*  
*Body confused by the fear of disappearing*  
*But my courage left me in the first gloom\**

It's strange

It seems to me that there's a certain point  
On the life map of each of us  
And when you reach it  
Every trip becomes a return  
And every mile takes you  
Further and further from your companions  
And closer and closer  
To those who stayed at home

In the morning  
In the coach  
The guide told us  
How the First Voyage  
In fact was a failure  
And how Bartholomew Diaz returned  
Broken and embittered  
To tell the King about the *Cape of Storms*  
At the edge of the world  
Beyond which nothing lies  
But the furious sea  
And the fatal shoals hidden in fog  
Sharper than Levantine sabers

Later the King changed a detail  
In the log of the voyage  
And rewarded the Navigator  
With riches and glory  
For  
The disheartened homeland was in need of  
Places of good hope  
New horizons  
Words of comfort  
And encouragement

9. 2003.

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\* From Semezdin Mehmedinović, *Nine Alexandrias* (City Lights Books, San Francisco, 2003. Translated by Ammiel Alcalay), 39.

## November

A bicycle in the bedroom  
and spiderwebs  
on the spokes  
our child's outgrown clothes  
packed in bags  
for the Salvation Army  
your wide-open eyes shining in the dark  
sighs from the depths of lungs  
the scent of your upper arms and pajamas  
warm hips touching  
a clock radio and a glass of water  
on the nightstand  
photos from summer vacation  
rain drumming  
on the windowpanes  
Mondays  
Tuesdays  
Wednesdays  
Thursdays

## Real Estate

*To Jaroslav Šulc*

The clink of kitchen utensils  
Used to spill onto the streets  
From the open windows of my hometown

The hum of petty family dramas  
Veiled by lace curtains  
Children's shouts  
The evening news on TV

Sometimes only the upholstered silence  
Of long Sunday afternoons

These windows are all shut now  
The sounds lost, I can't hear them anymore  
They've turned into real estate

The shackles of poetry and homelessness  
Have dropped from me  
Onto the softened summer asphalt  
Of some other towns

They've slipped down soundlessly  
Onto the thick carpets of my rooms  
Into the torrid sands of ocean beaches  
Into the liquid sugar of her lap  
Into the mealy artificial snow  
Of family photographs

The scars are slowly fading away  
Under layers of fat

## Happy Family

Less and less eager  
more and more discouraged  
dissatisfied  
with his fulfilled dreams  
unfulfilled life  
himself  
with the yellow sweat stains  
on the pillow  
with her love  
silently fading  
in dissatisfaction  
exhaustion  
in the smell of his pillow

Tired  
more and more lonely  
increasingly upset  
dissatisfied  
with herself  
him  
unsuccessful diets  
with her unfulfilled dreams  
her unfulfillable dreams  
with an overfilled life  
with the dissatisfaction  
of their child

The child  
more and more distant  
less and less satisfied  
a girl confused about herself  
about the world  
the TV screen  
her mom and dad  
about their dissatisfaction  
with her  
with themselves  
with life  
with love  
silently fading



## **Awakening**

*To Milorad Pejić*

I get out of bed –  
the first step into a new day  
and the body is flooded with sorrow  
the very moment it touches the ground,  
it shakes and whimpers like a plane  
touching down on a sunny winter afternoon,  
when kissed by its own shadow.

.

## As Far As I Can Touch

1.

The world is white and mud's growing  
Under asphalt  
And nothing is going on  
As far as I can see

Nothing remains the same

Alice's cabin is getting older  
Changing its colors  
And new rifts emerge on the driveway  
To the Indian Creek Farm

2.

A pair of boots  
Dirty with mud  
Abandoned in the middle of the room

Alice has just washed her hair  
She shivers  
Like the broken remote control in her hand  
A steam pillar is rising from her head  
From the cup of hot coffee she carries  
*As Fire Walks With Her* \*  
All the way from the couch to the TV and back

She kisses me  
Her tongue is as gravelly as a kiwifruit  
Full of seeds  
And green inside

---

\* David Lynch, *Twin Peaks II: Fire Walks With Me*, 1992

3.

The world is white  
And mud is rising under the mud  
Nothing's going on as far as I can touch

Just drunk Alice raping an angel  
With the accuracy of dart masters  
She infallibly finds the hole  
On the angel's neuter body  
And jabs her telescopic dildo  
Directly into its heart

4.

I kiss her

Angels shiver around us  
Buttoned up in their smooth piglet skins

They are so predictable and fragile  
Like the Jack from Alice's Box  
Always jumping up  
Exactly at every sixteenth beat

SPRACK!!!  
What the fuck?!

And Alice laughs  
And I am freaking out again and again

5.

One day I'll cut her hair  
And reveal her parrot head

## Gertrude\*

Gertrude  
Sometimes I think that your name could be:  
GERTRUDE  
It was worth all the time  
Tracking you down  
All the way to the river's mouth  
Down  
*Where water comes together with other water*\*\*  
Gertrude  
From the side you look like  
Those Japanese Barbie-faces  
Like those battery-powered toys  
That hum when you touch  
Gertrude  
Your clean-shaven arms  
Touch me and I shake  
I'm a Quaker  
And I quake  
Like the fingers  
Like the needle  
Like the thread  
When they touch me going by  
Your clean-shaven arms baby  
Your eyes full of smoke  
When I track them down  
Where the color comes together with other color  
Way down in the XENON CLUB  
Where electrons get together  
Loose electrons  
Cold electrons  
Gertrude  
What a name  
It sticks to my tongue  
Like a fungus, cinnamon, like a razor blade  
Stub my pale cheeks  
With your pierced tongue  
With your wireless thoughts  
Gertrude

---

\* The alternative title of the lyrics of the song recorded by SCH is "Kazumi." (SCH – Vril, 2002.)

\*\* The title of the poem and the 1985 poetry collection by Raymond Carver.

## Trudi

Trudi has hentai eyes,  
an apple-shaped behind,  
and a silly boyish hairstyle:  
just consider all the possibilities,  
all the reasons  
to enjoy.

Because New York is lustful and naughty  
in springtime,  
a whirlpool full of traps,  
and we tumble into them,  
into illusions of each other,  
into each other's arms.

It doesn't take much,  
just curiosity,  
naïveté,  
excitement,  
some old-fashioned wisdom,  
and attention to detail.

There's no mystery in it,  
you only have to find yourself  
in the right place  
at the right time—  
these things just happen  
sometimes.

Trudi and me,  
for example.

## Liquid Crystals

The idling of the video camera  
from wall to wall, from face to face  
between you and me  
between them and us –  
the world is colorful and painless.

While I observe you  
you spread out in my consciousness  
as in the polarized shallows  
of an LCD.  
Painlessly I zoom you in and out  
I focus and unfocus  
till you make me  
begin to record  
with some long-postponed thought,  
a nervous crack of your fingers,  
with some petty sorrow.

I know you well,  
we've been together a long time.

I love that wandering spark in your eyes,  
the sudden flash of myself  
in your words,  
the reflection of your presence  
in my thoughts – the moment  
when you decide to start remembering  
and when I know you know I know.

And you know  
that I know  
that you know.

## Treatise on Nostalgia

Nostalgia: the bitterly sweet desire for one's own self, for bygone, dimly foreseen, or disregarded places, people, and events that look as though they were here all the time, near at hand. And yet, they slip away from us into the past or the future the moment we reach out for them.

Nostalgia is not just human regret and lamenting for paradise, be it lost or never known; it is most of all yearning for the very act of living, often hellish, in its fullness, sense, and solidity. Nostalgia yearns for memories and desires of the past to be reincarnated in the eternity of the present moment and to take root in the loose sand of the future.

Nostalgia is the soul's entropy, its unusable essence. The rest of it is made of water, air, instincts and information saved or lost in the storehouses of one's memory.

Often wrongly equated with melancholy, nostalgia carries a unique shade of mournfulness, a *spark of grief* in the eyes of a genuinely nostalgic person. Because nostalgia is a *desire* and, unlike melancholy, it does not feed on passivity and resentment. It gives rise to fatalistic creativity and an irreligious faith that nothing happens irrecoverably and in vain.

Unlike other passions and longings, nostalgia does not seek its own fulfillment but its *perpetuation*. Sensual desire, longing for life eternal, for power, glory, comfort, adventure, security, longing for happiness, freedom, justice, possessions, truth – all these push human life along from one point to another in space and time. Nostalgia alone perpetuates itself. Like a snarled, endless ball of yarn, it unremittingly rolls up, unravels and winds up again and again throughout life. In youth it looks toward the future, to the *foreseen*; in maturity and old age it turns toward the present and past, to the *disregarded* or the *bygone*. Youth thus ends and maturity starts at the moment when yearning for the disregarded prevails over longing for the foreseen. When nostalgia turns into yearning for the bygone, it is a clear sign that one has grown old. So it may happen that the *real* places, characters, and events of our youthful memories (whose “triviality” once drove us away into the world of meridians and daydreams), can, in later life, seem much more *surreal* and fairytale-like than what we recall of those same escapist worlds and all the far away places we eventually reached as grown ups. This *algorithm of nostalgia* is best observable in literature, in the works of young, mature, and “older” writers.

Love and art are born of nostalgia, of the yearning for fullness, solidity, and meaningfulness in life along our paths to eternal forgetting and indifference. Love and art are born of the desire and will for the experienced, bygone, and foreseen to be reincarnated and shared with others in the eternity of the present moment. Nostalgia is thus the core and the charm of every genuine love and every genuine artistic impulse.

Nostalgia is a testimony to foreseen, bygone, and disregarded loves, a comfort and encouragement to the nostalgic lovers whose love has never happened or reached an *end*

in time and space, but goes on perpetuating itself in the endlessness of their and our hope that nothing, nothing whatever, happens irrecoverably and in vain.



## **Long Distance Loves**

You call me less and less  
and we have less and less time  
and your e-mails are shorter and shorter,  
full of pointless images, attachments,  
and links to all kinds of miscellaneous oddities.

## Tango Maruka

You are left without illusions,  
Maruka;  
I have only a few remaining,  
quite unsupported,  
about myself,  
about her,  
and about you.

So every time you crush  
one of my remaining illusions  
with the force of your resistance to me  
and to yourself,  
every time I imagine you in the supermarket  
thoughtfully holding a lottery ticket  
or at the mirror carefully getting ready for bed,  
putting on lotion and pulling on your nightgown –

every time  
something in me dies  
and leaves me astonished,  
how much life is still in me,  
how many illusions I still have about you,  
about her,  
about myself.

*Maruka, Maruka,  
I call your name out in the nights.  
Maruka, Maruka,  
come here before the dawn appears.  
Maruka, Maruka,  
bring back the times of miracles.  
I fear the news that will come,  
Maruka.\**

---

\* Excerpts from the song from the eighth episode of the TV series “Hříšní lidé města pražského”; the author of the lyrics is Vladimír Sís, (c) 1968 Československá televize.

## Horror Café

Where's all this leading to? Nowhere –  
I agreed wordlessly  
with the good-looking barista:  
she'd tenderly poured a perfect milk flower  
onto my cappuccino  
and took a shot of it with her digital camera.

We watched in silence her *mandala*  
desperately suffocating in my cup  
while sinking into the thick milky foam  
before a sugar avalanche totally desecrated it  
and I completed the mutilation with a teaspoon.

It reminded me of Jung –  
how he saw the mandala  
as a representation of the unconscious self.  
And of Aristotle who claimed  
that empty space would always be trying  
to suck in everything around  
to avoid being empty.  
Mario Praz describes *horror vacui*  
as the suffocating atmosphere  
and clutter of interior design  
in the Victorian age.  
And so on.  
Where did it all lead to?

Nowhere –  
the good-looking barista and I agreed silently  
as I rushed to pay and leave  
before the shamanic fingers  
of the café laptop typists started sucking us all  
into the emptiness of their lives  
and screens.

## American Love Poem

That morning  
when we found a mouse in the kitchen mousetrap  
deformed into a small dirty ball of gray yarn  
you said,  
shaken:  
it's still a baby!

Trapped, all mice look like babies,  
baby -  
I said.

And your pity for the smashed spine and guts  
of the poor little thing  
is not an act of love and compassion,  
but of the philistinism in your soft heart.

## **West Side Story**

A girl hurriedly crosses the street:  
a Starbucks coffee in one hand,  
pressing a phone to her ear with the other.

I try to develop the scene  
to add some twist to the plot,  
anything –  
a traffic accident,  
a puff on a cigarette,  
melancholy.

In vain.

## Treatise on Mirrors

Of all her survival skills, my daughter first mastered mirror-gazing. The agility with which she creates her various reflections by shifting expressions, experimenting with different clothes, brushes, lipsticks and mascaras, is simply fascinating, as is the ease with which she rejects her creations or identifies with them. My daughter's fascination with the mirror surpasses the curiosity of mirror-gazing dolphins, pigs, monkeys, and other animals who are also capable of recognizing themselves in the looking glass. The child instinctively *knows* that her image in the mirror simultaneously *is* and *is not* herself, that what she sees in it is her reversed reflection and at the same time her two-dimensional confirmation of existence. Hence the mirror-gazing process is complete only when we identify ourselves with our own reflections, when we adopt them and offer them to others to gaze at, when we take our reflections out on the street, amid the other reflections, amid the other mirrors.

Other visual media lack the mirror's immediacy and literalness, just as other cities lack the nightmarish infantility of the New York streets in which the three-dimensional illusion of reality ecstatically entwines with the two-dimensional reality of the mirror. New York streets are an endless mirror, a delirious reality-show in which the reflections of passers-by, buildings, and cars multiply to infinity until now and then they crash against one another, thus opening up irreversible gaps between what exists and has no reflection and what might not exist but is objectified by mirrors.

Life is everything that the mirror does not remember, everything that the mirror *takes for granted*, everything whose absence comes to light in all its brutal literalness only when it has disappeared from the mirror. Or when the mirror itself has broken. Like the phantom of the World Trade Center. Like the softly shaven crotches and delicate lingerie I imagine beneath the lanky rushing reflections of girls in the shop windows on West Broadway, in the afternoon rush, in glass shards on the pavement, in the back of the ambulance that has just swallowed up somebody's reflection off the street. Like my parents, absent from mirrors ten years and more, but present in my thoughts, dreams, photographs, in the features of my face and my child's, in our gestures and medical histories. My parents' breath still mists the mirrors I gaze at myself in, fogs my reflections everywhere around me, on the New York streets, in the miracle in which mirrors, again and again, refocus us into the center of our own universe.

## Norman

*To Stephen Cummins*

They found Norman on the kitchen floor.  
He'd lain for days in vomit,  
amid empty wine bottles, until a neighbor  
called the police about a foul smell  
seeping out of his apartment.

He hadn't shown up in half a year.  
He'd sometimes  
dropped out of sight before for a while  
but never for so long; he used to spend months  
hung over on the couch out at Stephen's farm.  
He was a friend, a drunk, a farmer,  
a painter, and a poet— in just that order.  
He claimed his family came from Tuscany,  
and after one bottle always decided to go there  
though after his second he would remember  
that he'd really better apply for a passport first.

At the funeral his two sisters showed up,  
an old granny,  
his lover from back when they were hippies,  
and a decrepit senator from Albany,  
his boyhood buddy.  
Their appearance made us recall the fact  
that Norman was actually quite an aged man.

We scattered part of his ashes around the farm,  
and buried the rest  
with an apple sapling.  
His furniture, books, and drawings  
we split among ourselves.

We mention him quite often  
and make toasts in his name.  
We don't say *To Norman*,  
but *To our Dead Man*.  
The glasses ring awkwardly in our hands  
like a cell phone falling on the asphalt  
and some muffled shiver freezes the moment  
between two smiles.

## Obama

### I

The best moments of my life, as I was living them,  
I didn't know they were the best. I recognized them  
only later on, usually too late,  
at times that seemed to be  
the hardest in my life –  
but mostly weren't.  
That's probably why, with passing years,  
I'm less and less enthralled  
with the wisdom of misfortune and despair,  
and more and more with the despair and angst  
of happy moments recognized too late.

### II

Asked in a TV debate about  
the hardest moments of his life,  
the primary candidate recalls his mother's death,  
a childhood without a father. A shadow  
crosses his face unforeseen by protocol.

The counter candidate Clinton,  
a bitter smile upon her face, replies: “Well,  
I think everybody here knows I've lived  
through some crises and some  
challenging moments in my life. And...”  
the whole audience emits a sigh of sympathy  
accompanied by loud applause.

### III

These best moments of my life, as I recall  
the hardest and the best ones from the past,  
the way I was  
and how and what I am now – in a world,  
a time when the worst misfortune I can think of,  
the greatest imaginable fear is  
the stock market collapsing,  
gas going up to 5 dollars a gallon,  
somebody behind my back  
pricking my sweetheart's peach  
with Clinton's cigar and leaving me  
*with some crises and challenging moments*  
to deal with until the last day of my life.



## The Middle Class is taking off for Heaven

I lie in my room and think about my life  
and other people's lives.  
I think about my woman; I think about  
other people's women and about  
women who aren't anybody's,  
about my friends and other people's friends.  
How can I ever tell something is mine?

For instance, this room,  
this rented apartment of mine,  
what makes it mine? A key in a lock?  
My exclusive right to lock and unlock it,  
precisely defined and limited by a lease?  
It became mine the moment  
I *rented* the right from the owner  
to include others in my room or exclude them.  
(It became the owner's when he *bought* from  
the previous owner the right to rent it out –  
which nearly equates the ontological status  
of my and his possession.)

The fact that it's my apartment isn't at all  
changed by how I feel in it,  
whether I even stay in it and how much,  
whether I like the place or don't like it,  
whether I maintain it well or badly –  
as long as I pay the rent regularly  
and obey the lease – this is MY apartment,  
not someone else's, in it, I decide  
who can be in it, or not, and when.

And that's the most important thing.  
The same way, I know that this is my life,  
not someone else's.  
Only I have the exclusive right to use my life,  
guaranteed and limited  
by natural and social laws.  
I am allotted a life for temporary use  
to let others into it, or out of it, as I wish,  
to separate and unite, and as long as I regularly  
pay the bills and obey rules and laws  
this is MY life, not somebody else's, and in it,  
I will decide who can come into it or not,  
and when, and how.

I have let those that I love in  
and they have let me into their rooms and lives.  
We don't claim any rights to each other,  
except what we've tacitly given each other,  
and, as long as we love each other,  
we will never claim the right.

For someone to be my friend,  
s/he doesn't have to be mine.  
Nor even nearby.  
The only thing that counts is  
how I feel with those that I love,  
how much I care about them and they about me.  
Their rooms are theirs, but in them,  
I often feel at home.  
The friends of my friends are mostly mine too,  
at least until they get married and become  
more somebody's else than their own  
and give that somebody  
the exclusive right to decide  
who can or cannot be, and when,  
let into their lives and that the *somebody one*  
lets them have the same right over her/him.

From that moment on,  
it doesn't matter any more  
how I feel with you,  
whether I love you or not,  
whether I care for you  
and vice versa –  
as long as we pay our shared bills regularly,  
as long as we respect the rights and duties  
of togetherness,  
you are MINE  
and not someone else's,  
and I am YOURS and not some other woman's.

And my room is no more mine but ours,  
and your life is no more yours but ours,  
and our life isn't yours any more but mine.

## Contemporary American Poetry

I've been wondering  
how woefully few junkies and alcoholics there are  
amidst NPR's contemporary American poets,  
even how few just plain smokers, and how  
woefully many non-smokers, vegetarians,  
globetrotters, and environmental activists.

How many poetry magazine editors  
and non-profit publishers there are  
among all those award-winning authors  
of suburban and collegetown opuses,  
multiply divorced and remarried ex-hippies  
with paid-off mortgages and lawns,  
how many professors  
of literature and creative writing  
who every now and then discover,  
screw, and marry future NPR poets  
and poetesses  
from the ranks of their own students.

I wonder  
how woefully few junkies and alcoholics there are  
among future NPR American poets,  
how few just plain smokers, even.

## Spasić, or More than a game

*To Adin Ljuca*

While the country I was born in was approaching  
its forced landing  
our life and football appetites were soaring high.  
Deaf and blind to the questions  
that had literally started exploding  
right in our faces,  
we contemplated a starry future  
for ourselves,  
for posterity,  
for our national soccer team.

Asked why he kept a player  
in the center of the defense  
who didn't belong there at all  
(with so many better players available),  
the national team manager  
(a man quite charming and wise)  
once replied:  
*This way, the other players on the pitch  
always know where the danger's coming from  
and so I get the maximum out of them.*

The coach liked to be on top  
of the weak spots of the team  
and would rather create them himself  
than discover them on the pitch  
in the middle of a crucial match:  
*Every real championship team has to have  
its own Spasić.*

I'm not sure  
if he said it exactly like that,  
but it's how my friends and I recalled it  
or embellished it,  
anyway.

When the country  
I was born in  
was forcibly landing us and dislanding,  
we were cheering each other up  
by contemplating  
the championship strategy –

creating and cherishing our own *Spasićes*  
with the belief that this was the best way  
to get the maximum out of ourselves  
for the World Cup  
which was just  
(out of earshot of the guns)  
going on –  
without us.

We completely lost sight  
of our opponents,  
we neglected our own strengths  
squandering them on tedious B-league  
games of survival,  
or taking them for granted  
until we eventually atrophied  
from the endless waiting to take our part  
in the World Cup Finals.

We're still around.

If you take a closer look, you might still spot us  
hunched down on the second-string benches  
of other countries with championship aspirations  
standing by with eyes and ears wide open  
for the slightest hint of forced landings  
in a coach's wise and seductive words.

## Weirdos

Deep and unreachable in their darkneses,  
capriciously childish and tender  
when we write to each other,  
while we talk about one of us  
who is not around.

I grew up with some of them,  
others, who I met as grown-up people,  
I could unerringly pick out in their photo albums  
on group pictures of their school classes.  
They've always been like that.

They remember every detail  
I've ever told them about myself,  
and even some I left untold.

There's always one of them around to remind me  
of important things about myself  
when I sink or soar too high  
in my petty existential delirium.

Some of them  
had nearly given up on themselves and on me:  
they fell in and grew together  
with their own lunacies  
pulling me and lifting me up  
as a magnet picks up iron filings,  
or a comb torn bits of paper.

People  
that I love,  
scattered along the meridians  
and along their abysses,  
among monsters of normalcy.

## The End of Summer

*To Zelkida*

*What are we to each other after all?*  
I think in the car, while driving  
back from the coast  
as my palm detects a slight deflation  
in your body – still warm and plump from the sun,  
fading slowly with each mile in resistance to the  
same question and vainly repressing  
the same answer – that our lives actually  
weren't this trip, from refuge to refuge,  
from continent to continent,  
from one illusion to another,  
but all these traffic jams and rest areas  
on your journey towards me,  
all these collisions, breakdowns, and detours  
on my journey towards you, dear,  
on our way home.

### **About the author**

SASHA SKENDERIJA (1968) lives in Ithaca and New York City. He has published poetry collections in Bosnian: *Golo O* [“Naked O”] (Banja Luka, 1987) with three other young authors, *Kako naslikati žar-pticu* [“How to draw a Phoenix”] (Sarajevo, 1990), *Ništa nije kao na filmu* [“Nothing’s like in the movies”] (self-published, Prague, 1993), *Praški fraktali* [“Prague Fractals”] (self-published online, 1998). An edited and extended compilation of the last two self-published collections was published in Bosnian in 2005 with the title *Zašto je patuljak morao biti ustrijeljen* and later in English translation as *Why the Dwarf Had to be Shot* (Black Buzzard Press, Austin, TX, 2008).

### **About the translator**

WAYLES BROWNE (1941) studied Slavic languages and linguistics at Harvard and MIT, Cambridge, Mass., and the University of Zagreb in Croatia. He now teaches languages and linguistics at Cornell University, and is an editor of Slavic journals in several countries. Recent translations include a scholarly obituary; e-mails for Amnesty International; birth, marriage, divorce, and death certificates; and a humorous book about cheese. W. B. has been Sasha Skenderija’s principal English translator since 1993.



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