

ANDREI VOZNESENSKY / FOUR POEMS

Graphomaniacs, Invocation, and The Break were translated from the Russian by Catherine Leach, Maureen Sager, and Pierre Coupey.

GRAPHOMANIACS

graphomaniacs of Moscow!
your balls are emptier
than the holes in scissor-handles —

you judge me harshly
but still you steal
my broken lines —

you, of course, being innocent
of lying neglect.

I'll whistle down from the heights
down from the Vladimir wastes —
useless mouths
gape open! start listening!

Suzdal is an old town in Russia in which there are many old and beautiful churches.

INVOCATION

Suzdal virgin

shining on this white wall
like a woman, selling tickets,
in the oval arch of a window

let me in
where they don't allow
anyone
over sixteen ...

Nothing is so simple to understand.

THE BREAK

How much lead is poured in
how many pig iron
lies. . .

my face breaks

with the weight

of my ears. . .

*Translated from the Russian by Catherine Leach,
Maureen Sager, and Seymour Mayne.*

SNOW BLIND

Up to the waist in snow,
 up to the heart—
 snow right up to the neck,
racing to Winnipeg—
cars streak through the air
 like snowballs.

Snowbound
 cars
ask one another
 for a light.
That passerby is Macbeth!
 Rumbling
snowdrifts chase after him
 at top speed.

Girl in a snowdrift,
 cabbage in a dumpling,
woman with child—
 all are screaming!
Like clairvoyants
 the blinded
 rush forward—
pity those that get in the way.

The dump truck careens
 like a lurching snowman.
Blind beggars sing their way into church—
 Snow, everywhere snow.

I haven't smashed up
 but cast in fresh plaster
I'm like a broken
 leg.

Like a plowman,
that Black shoves on his bumper:
the snowdrift rocks—

“Vive l’amour!”

And you there in the Volkswagen
like a frosted candy,
if you’re speeding—
why look where you’re going!

Hey, snow-drop bursting from a snowdrift,
witch of the womanly craft,
you touched

your Ronson
to the dynamite
fuse!

Blindmen everywhere—
to the right
to the left.

The clearsighted don’t stand the chance
of a snowball in hell!

Blindness floods in from the sky—
magnificent, unfathomable!

Save us—

our eyes are filling up—
In a time of blindness
the blind lead the blind
with the braille of hopes,
the blindfolds of childhood,
the blurring of doubletalk
and blizzards of other blindness!

Fly blindly—love blindly!
And if I’ve said it wrong
and I’m to blame,
say that I didn’t let love

totally
blind me.