

well my lady my dear my love don't cry take it easy
open your soul and mind and be naked
and let us hope that my almighty penis
can stand erect long and long and great
like the flagpole of United Nations in New York City
soaring and reaching peace to you
amen

Translated by the author and Harry Aveling

REZA BARAHENI / IRAN

Cemetery

The criminal prison autumn
has arrived outside without
us seeing its signs
If we were
in Darakeh now
we could see
the cemetery of yellow leaves
And now that we are not there
we had better put
our heads on the cold tiles of the cell
and sleep until
the sound of shooting startles us
and we rush
to the hole in the cell's iron door
and if the windowlet is open
watch the silent caravan of the innocent
like Ardaviraf who saw
pre-Islamic hell dwellers
like Mohammed
who saw post-Islamic hell dwellers
The identity of the caravan of the innocent
will not be proven in the course of time
Future archaeologists

will remove the firing squad's last bullet
rattling in the empty skull like a peanut
and send it to the laboratory
so that at least
the geological stage of the crime
will be brought to light
And the bald scholars of the future will write
two or three dissertations connecting this peanut
to a dark prehistoric time
which is our present

Translated by the author with David St. John

Y A H S I E N / T A I W A N

Abyss

Children are always losing themselves in his hair.
Spring's first torrent lurks behind the overgrown pupil of his eyes.
Part of the year is shouting. A nude is beginning its night's celebration.
In the virulent moonlight, in the delta of blood;
All the souls are coiled and swaying,
They strike at a forehead wilted on a cross.

This is absurd; in Spain
The people wouldn't even throw him a piece of bad wedding cake!
Therefore we will mourn for everything, spend a whole morning waiting
in line to touch the hem of his field coat.
Then his name is written on the wind, on the flag.
So he throws us
His leftover livelihood.

Go and look, and act sad, and smell the decay of time.
We are too lazy to know what we are anymore.
Work, walk, pay respect to the crooks, smile and become immortal.
He is a man who clutches maxims.
This is the countenance of days: all the mouths of wounds moan, and germs