

It is coming to crush me with its unseen weight.

If there's a train bound for Heaven  
on the Canadian National Railway I'll take it sometime.

Now I hold my knees and sit in the doorway.  
It's a long time from morning till night. Life is short.

Fear is my enemy.  
I don't see reconciliation as wisdom.

Alcohol can't remove stains on the soul.

Not a prayer, but fire; give me instead a cold fire.

*Translated by Takako Uthino Lento*

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AGNES GERGELY / HUNGARY

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## The Biographer

And I had no shoes.

My father was a porter and he had no shoes;  
my father's father had been herding the baron's  
sheep from barnyard to barnyard,  
in his dreams, and he had none either;  
my love was a tubercular chorus girl,  
oh, *chant macabre!* the war;  
the reconstruction; sure, I made mistakes;  
however, on a certain October morning  
I had seen it all; ever since  
I've kept on telling myself "I had no shoes"

besides, I gave some Jews a hiding place  
and Attila József the poet was my friend

on several occasions.  
Why, I even loaned him my shoes.

## The Radio Reporter

Hungary's largest sub factory!  
Her most sought-after export item!  
The match of the century  
In the world's largest stadium!

On the most outstanding scholar-----  
To the excellent artist-----  
With the important writer-----  
In the largest jungle of our country . . .  
The Hungarian Athens!  
The Hungarian Stockholm!  
The Hungarian Père Lachaise!  
The Hungarian dinosaur.  
Hungarian jazz.  
The popular mannequin-----  
The world-famous egg painter.  
The reporter

in the jungle;  
the reporter in the Père Lachaise;  
the reporter in the egg.  
On the earth, in the air, under the water.  
Under the earth.

*Translated by the author with Larry Levis*

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DARIO JARAMILLO / COLOMBIA

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## The Art of Poetry: One

You ought to make use of poetry  
to speak badly of your family;