

Joanna Salamon · *Poland*

BALLAD FOR A SOLONAUT

to the memory of Przemek Golba

Przemek changed into a bird
and flew down all of a sudden.
Out of eternity he slipped through
for a Moment; it is easier for birds.
Perhaps he wants some crumbs of life
from our daily bread.

Not long ago I revisited the town
where our youth
had been kindled by the embers
dying around us.
Perhaps that was why the things that terrify us most—
Heaven and Love
had seemed so intimate and safe?
Przemek on a glider had gone up to Heaven
until he soared to the Sun—¹
and stayed there for good.

He was about twenty-six years old
(if you add sadness, a bit older)
his death is nothing like a ballad.
And now all the Earth, so many men . . .
make ready to follow in his path

translated by Marianna Abrahamowicz

1. To the Sun: the name of a street in Czczecin leading to the cemetery.