

THE ANGELS

A wisp of smoke,
a shadow rises,
crosses the room
where an old woman,
a goose's wing
in her feeble hand,
sweeps the stove ledge.
A fire is burning.
Remember me,
whispers the dust.

November mist, rain, rain
and the sleep of cats.
The sky black
and miry above the river.
From gaping emptiness time flows,
flows over the fins
and gills of fish
and over the icy eyes
of the angels
who descend behind the thin dusk,
with sooty wings to the daughters of Cain.

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a shadow rises,
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A fire is burning.
Remember me,
whispers the dust.

translated by
Michael Hamburger