

Clemency Clause

Kegyelmi záradék

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Like somebody whose final wish was granted
 who ate his food the last he'll ever get
 who drank his last wine as much as he wanted
 who even got a final cigarette

and watched the smoke clouds drifting there forlorn
the way his frightened little soul will float
when he'll be strangled in the early dawn
and dangled on a rope around his throat

Condemned to death I've known this gloomy cell
but now I'm in the yard the sun's ablaze
I have to rub my unprotected eyes

which still belong there to that blackest hell
You make me itch you noxious sunny rays
my clemency was such a strange surprise

[illegible]

I felt let down my soul wanted to sleep
it wasn't even half a twitch before
I could have reached the bed's inviting deep
to stay there and to sleep for evermore

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[illegible]

I climb the mulberry tree when I am fed
to settle high up in the canopy
my crow's nest on my mast from overhead
I watch the tossing shadows of the sea

we all receive life sentences because
we're locked up lifelong at our normal site
according to the known clemency clause

From **Selected Poems** by István Baka