

# Clemency Clause

Kegyelmi záradék

1

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

.....

.....

.....

.....

[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