

Farewell to My Friends

[*Búcsú barátaitól*](#)

Pehotny Yorick brothers-but-in-law
You amble arm-in-arm and soon embark
One for his misty slate-blue Elsinore
And one for Petersburg before the dark

But crows have one crow language nothing else
The Danish ones sick up the 'r's of course
While Russians often speak with softened 'l's
And suffixed 'ka's except when showing force

But spring is kind to Russians and to Danes
When icicles like badly shaken cocks
Go dribbling in the dawn and leave their stains
Above the Neva and the city blocks

Where sausages mean hours in a queue
Still kinder is the dusk in Elsinore
The best time for a sizzling barbecue
Although a portion costs a penny more

Than Yorick finds inside his sorry purse
Perhaps that penny piece would not be missed
If he had gone beyond Horatian verse
And knew say Móricz the great novelist

Yorick Stepan has life been champion
Or have you found it bearable at least
Take heart you may have missed the Pantheon
But haven't missed the Woman at her feast

Farewell my friends good brothers whom I chose
You have betrayed my secrets great and small
But there's one secret you could not disclose
The Greatest One that's no secret at all

Translated by Peter Zollman

From ***[Selected Poems](#)*** by István Baka

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