

In Modo d'Una Marcia

In modo d'una marcia

The train has gone and with it Masha too.

 Moscow, where she comes from, couldn't wait
To take her back - express - and leave me blue.

It's destiny, I mutter. This is fate.

With a yen for vodka, my hempen bag

 In hand, I check the local huckster's den;

Spare me, please - at the till a drunken hag

Harangues us. What a sorry specimen.

At home at last I put some Schumann on,

 The wonderful Piano Quintet.

A teardrop stirs the crystal noggin.

How base existence is, and yet, how sweet.

And when the vodka's polished off, what then?

What gems do Trud and Pravda have today?

I'm bored by lies and machination,

 The world of bitter words and deadly play.

Cyphers crowd the Kremlin's balcony -

Below them, tanks and rockets end-to-end

Flow past for hours. I confess: I'm guilty.

 The joy I should be feeling can't be found.

Let her materialize now above me

I'd happily take my place at her feet

But we live in a gerontocracy

 You're either senile here or counterfeit

The train has gone and with it Masha too

Devouring cold tracks like a red arrow

She is fading to the point of zero:

Not yesterday, not tomorrow, – right now.

Translated by Bill Tinley

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

[←](#) [Previous page](#) [Next page](#) [→](#)