

Testament

Завещание

[*Testamentum*](#)

Do not consign me to the soggy plains
Of Petersburg when I shall pass away.
Find something milder for my cold remains. –
Here everything is mercilessly grey.

If I should leave my grave (a sudden choice
To shed the heavy earth and breathe fresh air),
My ears would split as Kirov's angry voice
Attacks Joe Stalin and begins to swear.

Like swarming wasps, a million dead would raid
The giant concrete Dame of Piskaryov;
The starved, the frozen of the long blockade
Would bellow: 'Hitler, Zhdanov: bugger off'.

There would be dance around me everywhere,
The murdered tsars, the revolutionists,
And masses from the Gulag's aftercare:
Siberia's remorseless icy mists.

So spread my ashes on more blessed shores:
Hot southern steppes are where I want to go,
Where Cossack, Tartar, Polovtsy had wars
But made their peace soon after, down below.

Or outside Moscow give me domicile,
Where graves and purple bushes interlace.
My Masha took a rest there for a while:
Till resurrection – That's my resting place!

A foetus nesting in earth-amnion,
Umbilical roots link me straightaway
To Gaia-Mother – in this union

I'll drink her snow-melt blood till judgment day.

Who cares? Will angels wake me or the great
Auror's gun? What use is it to tell
If I will go to heaven, or my fate
Will toss me nonchalantly down to hell?

Translated by Peter Zollman

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

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