

INTERNAL  
MONOLOGUES  
(a r o m a n c e)

D a n i j e l a K a m b a s k o v i c

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# KITE-FLYING

## MINERVA TO JUPITER

Nothing ever goes the way I want it done  
and written love is too pale when performed;

intent loses face and glee its muscle tone,  
they age miserably,  
sit on the toilet, looking at the spreading flab,  
wondering where the kick went.

But I was thinking of translating you  
to that other space in my palm  
where memory is alone with itself,

where Herodotus' men live  
mouthless, all eyes,

devouring food which can never rot,  
make me sick  
or leave my body.

## ISEULT TO TRISTAN

1

A sudden wind brought the cold:  
I took my coat out of its shroud

and closed my face against the icy dust.

I put my hands inside my pockets  
and found you there.

2

Tiredness  
has a way of filling your bones

then seeping out  
glutinous like blood  
to cover desks and screens.

I asked for rest  
and got to key

for the e-sail  
on the empty sea.

3

While the hot water pummelled  
I turned to face  
my hungry core:

the eye of a large cat,  
the cigarette tip  
glowing briefly

in the mouth of an intruder  
just before it is pressed into your skin.

My familiar sheets were cold  
and your imagined skin scalded me:

word pushed into unformed thought,

and, suspended on a chemical cloud,

I floated into your harbour  
to bide my time.



## CUPID TO PSYCHE

1

Between waking and sleep

I kissed you open and licked your heart.

As if through butter your hand entered

my muscle wall and took the quiver.

I bled

but you

never removed your eyes;

our bloods stained the sky

and were made sacred

by the new light.

2

I see you merging,  
and she believes you mean it.

Your payback:  
never quite giving what she wants.

If you will just give me your veins  
and hold my face above water,

I'll show you a place where merging stops:  
no payback needed.

3

My arrow crossed yours  
and stroked it gently in mid-flight.

Continents whooshed by:  
a certain aim,  
bull's eye.

two worlds dead,  
one alive.

## HAMLET TO OPHELIA

1

O yes: this was unexpected.

Your lips,  
wide, soft pillows,  
smothered the breath in my skin.

You grazed my nerves awake  
and kicked all the tins in the dark.

2

Your longing makes me long in unknown ways:

o to be  
split lengthwise, torn into pieces,

shot upwards, exploded high,

showered on the world in purple glitter,

licked clean while still twitching,

buried in a mound of quicksand,

made immortal

by the snouts  
of delicate maggots.

## VENUS TO MARS

1

You came close  
and my soul opened with my mouth.

I think I must learn  
the language of civilised lovers:

not too much, never too little,  
revealing, never embarrassing,

promising, never binding:  
reticent, never fearful:

you planted a holy jelly-  
snake under my tongue.

2

You knock my socks off  
and kiss my feet.

Palm on my fever,  
you kiss my runny nose.

In this dream, those are  
not repulsive

and every corner of my forgotten body  
blooms with invisible beauty.

Your absence makes me ideal.

My absence makes you wait  
for an imagined truth.

3

Yes, want. I know. Want.  
Want.

But why must you have me?  
Why stop the fire of thought  
with the soil of memory?

Desdemonas get too snively  
and Othellos protest too much  
before they go for the kill.

I like it like this:

exquisite desire  
stretches thought on a divine rack

and lost in a cloud of perfume  
the teenage belly gets to know it all.

Why rush certainty,  
that serrated knife, slicing  
through grist and fat

and reduce  
this steaming plate  
to congealed rubbish?



## MARY TO JOSEPH

1

It was good to be boss  
elated and strong

attractively mysterious: infinitely  
beddable/forgettable, a body –

albeit one pleasantly powered  
by the mind, that pulsating accessory  
with eight gears,

when it started raining drops of gentle loves  
in your past I had not walked:

and the rain  
washed my lipstick off,

built me a water skin  
of man-instinct  
which knows what needs doing

and rubs the mud of trust  
warm around my muscles:

the feathery thought  
fingering the nerve.

2

You  
there and  
me here  
the words are gone:

it's the pre-verbal, the foreign,  
the tongue too big for the mouth  
full of gratuitous meaning:

I've spent my life reading  
the poems you lived.  
I may be too young for this.

I wonder:  
would you still have me

if my vagina  
weren't young?

3

You want me?  
I come with baggage

which you must believe is divine:  
it comes along for the ride.

I'll always say it's yours,

and you'll give it a roof  
and space to grow

and never ask  
its provenance or purpose.