

Marko Pogačar

PURSUIT

translated from the Croatian by Andrea Jurjević

A black dog chases a black bird. everywhere seethes
tuesday. you and I run, oh tragic technique,
we stumble against roots, branches, relatives
—we look up high,
dark fragrant matter, at that reality—
we carry newspapers under armpits, nothing
is our last post, beyond nothing isn't possible.

and time, I say, time, you say
and everything spews—someone opens the door the dog flees,
and the world becomes a silver cage, and from it flees a bird.

the city then compresses, the whole city into one dirty window,
like a star into a black hole, like a dirty tissue into a pocket.

and all who walk with nothingness in their teeth, all with
their fear under tongues and a hand in cold hands,
all saints, bakers, secretaries and revolutionaries, pregnant ones, all
of them fast-frozen, watch—

fast as a rock a black dog chases a black bird, that's even faster.

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PRETTY OBSTACLES

translated from the Croatian by Andrea Jurjević

A house is a box.
there're various houses and various boxes, people say.
depending on needs, climate
spirit and other faults. there're so many
it's sometimes difficult to recognize them.

still, a house is a box, I say.
like a hot oven is the sun,
ribs a cage for the dreamless owl of the heart,
forehead a glass and each bone a flute. no.
I don't care in which order they arrived.

that's already the archeology of the house
and the philosophy of the box, or vice versa.
what's important are boundaries, if you want walls
and that those beautiful obstacles are everywhere.
every house and every box has to be able to be closed.

the key to success is in covers, in the house windows.
stronger than doors, slyer; always more secret-prone.
chimney is a hole at the nape. an opening for air
pierced by an awl if a rabbit is inside, better:

an exhaust pipe, the exit of the living from life.
no. smoke isn't a soul. there's nothing dumber and more boring
than soul. smoke is what makes the house-box possible:
the treachery of walls. an invitation for the sky's opening.