

Two Poems by Gunnar Ekelöf

Translated from the Swedish by Muriel Rukeyser and Leif Sjöberg.

AYÍASMA

The black image
under silver kissed to bits
The black image
under silver kissed to bits
Under the silver
the black image kissed to bits
Around the image
the white silver kissed to bits
Around the image
the very metal kissed to bits
Under the metal
the black, image kissed to bits
Darkness, O darkness
kissed to bits
Darkness in our eyes
kissed to bits
All that we desired
kissed to bits
All we did not desire
kissed and kissed to bits
All that we escaped
kissed to bits
All we desire
many times kissed.

AYÍASMA

Den svarta bilden
under silver sönderkysst
Den svarta bilden
under silver sönderkysst
Under silvret
den svarta bilden sönderkysst
Under silvret
den svarta bilden sönderkysst
Runt kring bilden
det vita silvret sönderkysst
Runt kring bilden
själva metallen sönderkysst
Under metallen
den svarta bilden sönderkysst
Mörker, o mörker
sönderkysst
Mörker i våra ögon
sönderkysst
Allt vad vi önskat
sönderkysst
Allt vad vi inte önskat
kysst och sönderkysst
Allt vad vi undsluppit
sönderkysst.
Allt vad vi önskar
flerfaldiga gånger kysst.

YOUR BROKEN SHOES

Your broken shoes
look out through your feet
your broken windows
look through your eye
lined with sawdust
stopped up with newspaper
smarting at the eyelid's edge
swelling at the instep

But I see you inside there
O blaze in a flaming lamp-bowl
O lamp in the heart!
You do not change with me
standing in the night
seeing you from the outside —
You do not change
and that was what I knew
what I wanted to know.

DINA TRASIGA SKOR

Dina trasiga skor
tittar ut genom dina fötter
Ditt trasiga fönster
tittar ut genom ditt öga
fodrat med sågspån
tilltäppt med tidningspapper
svidande i ögonlockskanten
svullnande i vristen

Men jag ser dig därinnanför
O låga i en flammig Lampkupa
O lampa i hjärtat!
Du byter inte med mig
som står i natten
och ser dig utifrån —
Du byter inte
och det var det jag visste
det jag ville veta.

GUNNAR EKELÖF, poet, essayist, translator (Petronius, Rimbaud, T. S. Eliot) was born in Stockholm in 1907. He is a member of the Swedish Academy. MURIEL RUKEYSER is a well-known American poet and translator. LEIF SJÖBERG co-translated Dag Hammarskjöld's *Vägmärken* (*Markings*); his studies have appeared in various journals; presently he is a lecturer at Columbia University. Twayne Publishers will publish *Selected Poems of Gunnar Ekelöf* translated by Muriel Rukeyser and Leif Sjöberg in 1967.