

Vagif Samadoghlu

Poems from the book “Far Green Island”

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1

My address is:
Infinity.
Time.
Location.
Yesterday,
today
and tomorrow.
What is seen,
What is not.
What is heard,
What is not.
Galaxy.
Solar system.
Globe.
Soil.
A little bit of Europe.
A little bit of Asia.
A large country.
My native land
Azerbaijan.
Baku.
A quiet street.
Building 4, apartment 37.
Room.
Triangular writing table.
Pen and papers.
Poems...
1962

2

If I die untimely,
Say: “He lived long.”

If I die when I am old,
Say that I died prematurely.

If I lie in bed for a year and then die,
Say that I died unexpectedly.

And if I die unexpectedly,
Say that I died after a lingering illness...
1962

3
I came earlier,
earlier than you.
Your absence.
I walked a little bit
without you.
I was waiting.
The cloud in the sky
was waiting with me.
Eyes winked.
Now, I don't know
whose eyes they were...
Perhaps, they were yours,
Or maybe, mine...
1962

4
Vessels go out into the sea
from thousands of points, mother,
I am feeling heaviness in my heart.
I know, mother,
my heart knows that
what is lost in this horrible sea
is never found.
Even not a boat
can save its life...
1963

5
There are huge churches in Rome,
But in Baku* there is a flat
with a big room,
and with a balcony with convolvulus...
There are skyscrapers in New York
which want to reach the God,
But in Baku there is a 14 meters' wide room
which is full of cigarette smoke...
1963

6
If the heaven lives
With dark clouds and blueness,

The earth lives either with labour
or with trickery.
And perhaps, I am living
and keeping my head
Flying in the sky,
Running on the earth.
1963

7
A hungry, cruel and hobo wolf
Is bustling about the forest.
There is forest - thank God!
There's something to do - thank God!
There's she-wolf, then there's love - thank God!

A hungry, cruel and hobo wolf
Is bustling about the forest.
There's forest - wallow around!
There's something to do - go and bite!
There's she-wolf - mount the high horse!
Fortunately, there's this, there's that...

A hungry, cruel and hobo wolf
Is bustling about the forest...
1963

8
Why are you barking?
Who are you barking at?
People are passing by you
smiling,
But you are barking
at this world
from everywhere.
Perhaps, you remember
the wholves that
tore your grandpa into pieces, ha?
So what...
Who can survive after wolf's attack?
Why are you barking?
Whom do you see with your eyes
which are as red as the setting sun?
Don't bark!
The world is big.
Who'll understand what you are saying?
Who'll get to know you?
You are not lying,
Or your barkings would
have passed from mouth to mouth.
How to explain you...

Don't bark,
my dear!
You won't find anything to bite
or to bark at in this city.
Keep your silence just for awhile.
We'll see
what the end of this beginning will be,
If there's necessity we'll even bark
You, by yourself,
Me, by myself...
1963

9
I heard three kinds of voice:
Hoarse voice,
Normal voice,
Soft voice.
The hoarse voice asked:
"How are you?"
The normal voice asked:
"How are you?"
The soft voice asked:
"How are you?"
I said:
"So-so!"
"So-so."
"So-so..."
1963

10
Tonight is the last one again,
Tomorrow the last morning,
The last wind is blowing the last sail,
The boat is sailing hardly...

This tree is the last one,
The last wind is blowing,
The last devil has again
Blocked the last way...

Now the last steps
Will tread the last street,
The last dark yellow people
Will again turn around the corner...

The last child is born,
The last man passes away,
And again there's someone crying,
And someone laughing for the last time...

Don't take a dagger
If you see your enemy!
Tonight is the last one again,
Tomorrow the last morning...
1963

1 1
This cloud reminds me
my deceased granny,
That one is like
the swarthy water-carrier
from the adjacent street.
People are like
Clouds in the sky.
And the sky is full of
natives and strangers...
1964

1 2
The thunder struck.
It was as firm as a dictator's signature,
and as clear and short as hope...

Then it rained.
The excessive load of the heaven
Poured down onto the earth...

And then stuffy heat...
1964

1 3
This wind is not the most fearful
of the winds which have blown
and will blow on the earth.
The street lamp frightens me
for a moment with its yellow light,
But this is not the most fearful of fears yet.
Your door was shut...
But this door
is not the most fearful
of the shut doors yet...
1964

1 4
I won't pick up
the receiver of my last day,
Even if my darkest thoughts

roar like the telephone's sound.
Hopelessness will find me
neither at work, nor at home.
I have hidden myself in joy now!...
1964

15
I'll comb my hair
A little time left till my death,
I'll wear neat and white shirt
A little time left till my death.

The sky will be blue,
And the clouds will be like
white foams
A little time left till my death.

I'll write a letter to you,
I'll tell you:
"I loved, love and will be loving you."
A little time left till my death,
A little time left till my death...
1964

16
It has been raining and raining
since the morning...
It rains even in winter,
in winter it rains onto the snow...
Sorry,
I remembered you
when it started raining...
I remembered you
when the snow got wet...
Sorry...
1964

17
Some day you'll fall down
near a wall
like a tired arm.
Don't wait in vain.
The God must have been talking to someone.
Put your life aside
and wait for your death...
1964

18

Today the clouds are like
the words which haven't been told,
And today everywhere is of the same color
as those untold words.
Another man is the cemetery
of questions which have died unanswered...
1964

19

A year will pass...
I'll get on a usual
"Moscow*-Baku"
15 passenger car train
and leave for the South.
No one will be looking for me
in Moscow,
No voice will be calling me
in Moscow.
And I,
I'll take to Baku
the yellow door of this dormitory,
the evil and good of the streets,
the atmosphere of my narrow room
which is filled with your smiles
and the Moscow of my Baky wishes...
1964

20

I might forget your laws,
But I can't forget
either your words
or your dialects.
If some day
the sudden and cold winds of life
throw me into the sea of other languages,
I won't forget even for a moment
Your sorrow,
Your joy,
Your hope.
And I won't forget even a feeling of yours,
My mother tongue, Azeri...
1964

21

If the Caspian* gets lost,
If the seagulls stop crying,
And if the shadow of these rocks disappears

While I'm alive,
If the Caspian disappears from my life
like a ring on my finger
While I am alive,
What shall I do,
What shall I do
If I lose the Caspian as well?..
1964

22
I was a big blue mammoth
During the icy times on the earth...
Then there was neither Koroghlu*,
nor Mary Pickford,
nor Lambaransky*, nor Henrich Ford.
Then there was neither right,
nor left,
Neither there was a road with traffic light.
Ice...
Sea...
Again ice...
It was cold...
I was a big blue mammoth.
Now... Now I am a piano teacher.
1964

23
If they are going to make a gallows
of this plane tree,
And if they are going to make a fire
of the boards of my grand piano,
Then during my lifetime
I have been breathing
while I was hung.
If so,
then I have been ice
while the sun was being trampled under my feet!..
1964

24
His dark black eyes
Are gazing at an overdried tree.
He is crawling
along the black and narrow city.
He is an old blind man.
The overdried tree he's gazing at
Is shedding tears drop by drop.
The teardrops are shed drop by drop

Into the blind darkness of the night...
1964

25
Though you abandoned me yesterday,
The prints of your elbows on the dusty table
Seemed to me as old as rock paintings.
Two white stains.
Two round spots.
They are like my goggled eyes
which are so after our parting,
after I am without you...
1965

26
The sea remains
without doors and windows
in winter.
The sea and sky are like twins
in winter.
I want to bring willows home
in winter.
I want to become a grandpa
in this of my age.
I am convinced that
man's life is filled with happy days
in winter.
But I don't believe
that ships get ruined
in winter...
1965

27
The window glass
Is painted with dust...
Someone has written his name on the glass
cutting through the dust.
Someone has been waltzing
on his tiptoes
in the dust.
Man saw dust,
What can we do?
The dust on the window glass
will be wiped off with a dirty duster,
And someone's name
as well as his waltz in the dust
will be wiped off as well...
After all,

The window has to be clean.
Because as we say:
"The world is a window,
Everyone looks at it and passes by..."
1965

28
My heart is opening and closing
Like the door of an abandoned cottage
in a windy autumn day.
I am drawing the profiles of my days
with my finger
on the dusty window glass of the world...
My God, just please,
Stroke my head at least!
1965

29
There is a ringbell on her door
Which is covered by a spider's web.
There is a pair of armchairs
in her room,
One has become ragged,
Another has remained quite new.
There stands an aquarium
in her window,
And there are swimming
five or ten fish
in the turbid water of that aquarium.
They are swimming so carelessly...
1966

30
Say, there was another girl in the world
other than you, my dear!
Now, either you kill me,
Or let me kill you...
1966

31
That strange and soft tune
that once you were murmuring all day long
in the language that I didn't understand,
Is still ringing in my ears.
I have learned by heart
the strange words of that nice and inconsolable,
of that distant and desperate song,

And they are still ringing in my ears...
That strange song that once
you were singing all day long
Is as far, unhappy and somehow cautious
as my native land...
1966

32
What's the sun?
It's the star
in the light of which
I don't see you.
What's the world?
It's a planet
the blocked ways of which
lead to your home...
1966

33
See, how our fates
separated us from
the trees in the forest,
from the grass in the mountains,
and from the pebbles in the river.
See, how we distributed
our lives that God bestowed on us
among mankind!
1966

34
Today
on the seashore
I was standing like a cross
over the dead body
of a seagull
which was soiled with black oil.
Mom, now I am starting
to resemble the grave as well...
1967

35
I am running from heat...
But it is not raining
neither at our home,
nor in the streets,
nor in the homes of relatives and friends.
I am running from heat...

But there is not even a single dew drop
on the faces that I see.
I am running from heat...
1967

36
If we don't take the seagull into consideration,
There is nothing and nobody
between God and the sea...
1967

37
You can arrest me and convict
within a day.
And that very day
You can make me lean
against the wall.
But,
But you'll have to shoot at me
for thousand or perhaps,
hundred thousand years.
You'll have to wait until I die.
You'll have to shoot at me
day by day,
month by month, year by year
until I die.
1969

38
Will my notebook die
as a man his heart full of words?
Or will it tell all what it knows?
Will crows be flying over its corpse?
Or will they be pigeons?
Who'll remember which of these
thousands of words?
Will this last page of my notebook
be closed tonight forever?
Or will it be opened tomorrow again?
If it'll be opened tomorrow,
The who'll do it?
My nation,
enemy
or the breeze?..
1969

39

The clouds are as
heavy, clear and kind
as the Georgians*
who have just left the restaurant.
Our garden is in such a bad state...
The fruits have dried,
the pond is split,
and the ditch is blind...
1969

40
Since the day when
I started expecting
help from my fate,
I am not caring about
my life anymore.
And all day long
you are telling me
that I have to live.
Now I don't need life,
I need to write poems...
1970

41
A lot of trees became cripples
this winter,
A number of forests met the spring
without their hands and legs...
Now the leaves are as noisy and innocent
as children,
They are not aware of the past winter...
1970

42
Come on, take me by the hand,
Let's go and visit the Zoo.
I have much to say,
I want to share them with you.
I want to share my words with you
Facing a big lion
who's slumbering in the cage...
1970

43
Oh dear, please, don't remind me,
Don't remind me that today is your birthday.
I can't afford to buy

any present for you...
Fortune has never favoured me
to enter to someone's life.
I have been able just
to stand behind everybody's door
as well as yours.
My fate has sent me
to this world
empty handed...
That's why, my dear, please,
don't remind me that today is your birthday...
1970

44
Some rain is pouring all day long
On the lips that are saying "I love you,"
On the children that are looking at the sun,
And on the boats that are going out into the sea.

Each drop of the rain of flowers
Brings a flower, brings a rose.
It brings a wish, a word,
Sometimes a fate, a fortune,
And sometimes hope, sometimes tears.

Some rain is pouring all day long,
It's painting the world with its color,
Joy becomes bigger, grief smaller,
Some rain is pouring all day long...
1970

45
Today they told me that
I have grown old.
Don't tell me that I'm going to die.
Today I was told that
I have grown old...
1971

46
I neither raised a stone,
nor rode a horse.
I could not set free
neither a stranger,
nor myself.
I came to the world
just for watching...
1971

47

To Molla Panah Vagif*

Today is holiday

and the wind is blowing.

Today the wind is bringing

the sound of an awkward orchestra

which is playing in the park

to my home.

There is nothing at my home

except for cheese and bread.

And there must be some Mocco coffee

at the bottom of the pot.

Today my eyes are gazing at

the shadow of the wings of a dead eagle

which is falling onto the side-walk from the flag...

1971

48

The sky is full of stars at night.

Some of them are thousand times bigger

than the sun.

Then why don't we see their lights?

Why don't they warm us like the sun?

Perhaps, because they are far from us,

too far,

as far as others' troubles...

1980

49

I want so badly

to be remembered by someone,

I want so badly

to be dreamt of by someone.

I want so badly

to be drunk to.

I want someone

to take my wishes by the hand,

to pick my memory from the ground.

I want so badly

to turn into someone's smile,

someone's sigh,

I want so badly

to be lit in one window

and go out right there...

1982

50

Forget me, forget,
Your memory is another load on my life.
I am still in need of my lonely voice,
my truth and lie.
I still need them.
My being without you
is more necessary for me
than for you...
1982

51

Don't forget,
when you go to bed tonight,
close your eyes tightly,
wrap the blanket around yourself
up to your forehead
so that you can be all in darkness.
And there in that darkness
remember me for a moment.
Then you'll see that
My eyes cast light on you
though it's weak...
1982

52

The gossips of this world,
and its hypocritical truth
are disturbing me.
Today this world
is an obstacle on my way of writing poems...
1982

53

I'll have a cat which will be
the softest one in the world.
I'll find an armchair
which will be wider than the world itself.
The smoke of an English pipe
which will be full of
the finest tobacco in the world
will surround me.
And a big wall-clock
will be standing in front of me,
And it'll be showing
the most beautiful moments
of my life...
1982

54

All the statues of the world,
Turn to the wall!
A lively, chubby child
is sitting on a facet horse
and is galloping it...
1982

55

There is a buzzing in my brain again.
It started again...
Who or what needs me,
my God?
Are there a lot of doors left
in the corridors of this life?
I am like a picture
which is in a blind man's hand...
1982

56

Suddenly I remembered
the sea which is like
a tired deer's eyes,
and a mermaid who is crying
having been abandoned in the desert.
What is filling my heart?
I don't understand.
The pregnant world
always bears war...
This day lasted so long...
There was lit a morning star
in the distance,
And a lamp
in the room...
1982

57

There's such a little time left
Until your arrival,
Just two hours.
Don't come, I beseech you, don't come,
Cheat me and today...

Forget about your promise,
Or fall ill again,
Do whatever you like,

But don't come, I beseech you,
I am not blessed with happiness...

Waiting for something every day
Is the bullwark of my life.
Neither happiness, nor love
Can make me as happy as
Parting does...
1983

58
They are lying,
It must have been lie.
I don't believe that Mozart
created his music easily
and smiling.
A man can't die so -
easily and smiling.
They are lying,
It must have been lie...
1983

59
I wish it were 1932 now
And I were in Chicago.
I wish I were sitting
in a cafe there
smoking my pipe.
And I wish
there were being played "swing."
I wish it were played in a brown grand piano
which had got out of tune.
I wish I were playing that grand piano
being a Negro...
1983

60
I am leaving now to come back home again,
Life has turned into the house with one room.
Where to head for, where to run?
The world is closed as well as that door.

The weakest gleam of this oil-lamp
Is shedding desperate lights on the wall.
God takes the word "joy" away from my poems
Saying "It is not yours!"
1983

61

This one is checked--bb - April 19, 2001

When the word "I love you"
is said with the voice
whose color has faded,
and when the eye of longing
can't distinguish the color
in a woman's voice,
Then nature itself
Becomes like an abandoned land...
That's why, be silent.
Don't save my life
with a voice
whose color has faded.
Don't cause this colorful life
that I am leading to fade.
And don't extinguish
the light in my eyes.
As it is, I don't know,
I don't know who has my life,
or who has my death...
1983

Baku - capital of Azerbaijan

Moscow - capital of Russia

Caspian - the sea in Caucasia on the coast of which Baku is situated.

Koroghlu - a national Azeri hero who lived approximately in the second half of the 16th century. He was one of the leaders of national freedom act against Osmanli invaders and the local feudals.

Koroghlu's real name was Rovshan. There is a famous saga among Azeri nation about Koroghlu. This saga is also poular in some other Turkic countries.

Lambaransky - Alish Lambaransky (1914-1998) was the Soviet stateman, the laureate of the USSR State Prize (1951), entered the Communist Party in 1944, he participated in World War the 2nd and left the front in 1942 as was deadly wounded. He has been working as a Deputy Oil Industry Minister of Azerbaijan SSR from 1954 till 1959. Other than all these, he has been working in different higher governmental posts.

Georgians - Georgia is a Caucasian country which is having the same border with Azerbaijan. Azeris and Georgians have been friendly since old ages.

Molla Panah Vagif - famous Azeri poet who lived in the 18th century.