

They Hear the Screaming

Translated by Beni Gothajner and Andrew Firestone (2014)

Some days the sick, lying snug in their beds

Hear how a patient is quarrelling with God.

Then they sink deeper in their mattress - graves,
glue pustulent eyelids more firmly closed

and lie completely covered in shadow.

Shivering, they may wriggle an ankle about.

But relentless, the pacing words pursue them,
fix them in a vice and oppress them.

The flesh awakes from its wintry freeze,
becomes warm, like fire, and the blood lights up:
places – images – dreams – rush past
ash-grey, eyes all inflamed like a pack

of wolves. All of them are gnashing their teeth,
and shreds of creatures protrude from their maws.

The sick look on through closed eyes,

thinking: well yes...how else, of course...

And listen through a fog as the man in the corner
rains pitch and sulphur on the Creator.

Fear like steel presses down on their breasts:

“Mortal, Whom do you try to abuse?”

They wrap up their ears with stinking straw,
crawl under the covers as if into sacks.

Don't want to hear and... do hear the screaming
of every hair on their heads, tearing all of the Worlds.

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