

## Warmer

Translated by Freda Hodge (2015)

I.

God sent out  
a finger from heaven  
and made a sign:  
Let Day now come!

His holy word  
the world eagerly welcomed,  
and so the windowpane  
became white,  
and wall and shadow  
at once became  
clothed in white  
and white became too  
the bed and I.

I lie beside the window  
and think about my dream:

... I run across hills,  
I run across fields  
searching for my mother.  
Along comes a stag with seven horns  
and tells me:

I am seven years old,  
you will run about for seven years  
searching for your mother.

I start to weep in the field  
and the grasses weep along.

The stag with seven horns stands still  
and says as follows:

I am seven years old —  
it's hard to run for seven years,  
through forests young and old,  
over hills high and low  
that God commanded me to spring over;  
perhaps, somewhere  
on the way, I will meet your mother —  
what sign shall I give her?

I start laughing in the field  
and the grasses laugh along:  
at the time that she was leaving  
she spent the whole day gazing at me,  
and told me that flowers  
bloom in my plump cheeks,  
red as blood and white as milk;  
if you come across my mother — tell her:  
no eyes pour forth their light now  
upon her child's little face,  
and the flowers begin to fade — —

Before my dream has ended  
my room is already rocking  
in pious silence, with fresh waves  
of light, that flow through the windowpanes.

The sun passes over the windowsill  
and seats herself gaily on the bed.

I lie listening as she caresses me:  
My child, dear child! You don't sleep even a single night,  
my poor child! You lie awake and weep  
while in the garden your brothers  
have already learned seven songs  
from the birds  
and reach their arms out  
to all the gates of the garden  
seeking you everywhere.

## **II.**

Trees, bend down  
closer to me,  
your younger brother.  
Into your green life  
I will plunge my gaze  
and upon your leaves set down  
and purge all that's in my heart,  
perhaps it will become easier for me.

And if stubbornly my life  
still cleaves to its grey burden —  
I will stand beside you  
and watch the Summer,  
as he tears out knights on fire  
(from the red sky-forests,  
that flourish at dawn)  
and merrily drives his spirit  
through your full veins.

And if my life is still hard for me  
I will lean my head against you.

A wind hurrying on his way will see,  
and jumping forward, ask you who I am —  
with your boughs you will shake him out an answer:  
a good little brother  
has come to us,  
tired from the journey  
he has fallen asleep.

And those who come strolling  
will say to each other:  
a leafless tree  
with the approach of summer,  
began to long for the garden.

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(1920)