

### *Inhaling cadmium*

The flowers are dying, softly, filling the space with a stench of floral decay.  
And the contours of different bodies are spiralling in the hollows.  
Decadent and symmetrical. Crushed from the shoulders.  
Heads as holes, rest upon invisible hands of their mothers, their daughters and their mothers' mothers.  
The bar owner, a big man with a fat cigarette in his mouth, is serving beers to a group of three who have taken over a large table in the centre.  
A skimpy-dressed, skinny woman reclining in the corner is staring at the group.  
"Get some meat on your bones", says the owner as he is approaching her table with a glass of vodka-soda. She continues to tap her long nails on the table and gives him a dead stare, unflinchingly.  
A red-head with an absurdly sad and contorted face is sinking deeper and deeper into his glass. He stands up, punches the brick wall, sits back down, his knuckles bleeding, blood dripping onto the floor as his body withers further to the ground.  
The flowers are dying, softly.  
People come and go.  
So many faces. Beautiful faces.

S slowly walks in. His habit fastened too tight—showing his belly—is dragging behind him, collecting all the spit from the city pavements.  
Clinking glasses and muffled sorrows.  
The smell of despair and lust is sticking in the air, like a sickly golden trickle.  
'Deum Verum' that continuously occupied S's head is now mixing in with 'I wanna be your dog' playing on the jukebox, from shitty speakers.  
He's humming, in his low baritone voice.  
S's mind shifts between "in His hands are all the ends of the Earth" and the desire to be on all fours.  
...to be on all fours right now, before the reclining woman with long nails, seeking her salvation as she taps her nails on his shaven monastic head.  
"And he is seen higher than the heights of the mountains".  
S looks around the first room, the second room.  
Who are they? They're all acting, playing themselves.  
Everything appears eternally unchanging.  
Let us occupy their gaze in confession.  
He tries to make eye contact.  
A gaze within a gaze within a gaze in azure glaze.  
Their eyes have swallowed it all.  
He sees the devil in their eyes, and tears and pearls.

He stumbles over words, trying to order gin.  
"Good to see you lad", says the owner, "Did you pray for our sinful souls today?"  
"Aye, all washed away!"

S looks at the red-head, his blood, cadmium red, has formed a huge puddle on the floor.  
"Oh rose, thou art sick".  
In his head, he paints them all as sick, dead souls.  
With a halo of joy.  
In a frenzy.  
He paints the warm nothingness which soaks their eyes.  
The cartoonish absurdity of the faces reflecting the cartoonish absurdity of their lives.  
Raw, simple strokes of their intoxication.  
Childlike simplicity of their lives, under which they hide the darkness of their souls.  
All the birth and growths, and death, and re-incarnations.  
Neolithic spirals spiral into spirals.  
Coiling lives.

The skinny woman rises to leave.  
The clacking sound of her heels, like satan's hoofs.  
A fading click-clack of a whisper. A quiet hymn to the serpent.

S downs his gin, and another one, and another one; thinking about sucking the skinny woman's fingers while a serpent is coiling around her long neck.  
He yearns to leave with her, to follow her, to worship her.

His burning thoughts, like candles in rows before the altar.  
Burning a hole in his head.  
It's too late.  
Someone shouts: "A comet is heading for Earth".  
Spiralling and spinning.  
All the birth and growths, and death, and re-incarnations.  
Spiralling and coiling in blues and purples and reds and pinks.  
The future is written in the skies.

S is wrapping his last gin in a bandage and carries out his sickness.  
He leaves, picks up his goat.  
Pulling the lead over white snows.  
His head is sick.  
His heart is torn.  
Inhaling cadmium.  
Inhaling cadmium.  
Inhaling cadmium.  
Murder me.  
Throw my bones over.  
Murder me.  
Throw my bones over...  
...into a shiny shiny onyx black casket.  
The blood on his cheek—cadmium red.  
His soul—zinc white.  
The trees—permanent greens.  
And all the skies, higher than the heights of the mountains—zircon blue.  
Poetry imitating a horizontal line, a straight line...descending.  
Throw my bones over.  
Ave Maria. Gratia plena.

*-Agnes Gryczkowska*