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Poems

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Goldsmiths
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Poems

Hasso Krull

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Introductory note

Hasso Krull has been one of the most prominent voices of Estonian poetry since the 1990s. Krull has published twenty books of poetry and received numerous awards. His best-known work is the epic poem *Meeter ja Demeeter* [Metre and Demeter] (2004), which received the Baltic Assembly Literary Prize in 2005. Krull is a communitarian anarchist and his religious preferences tend towards the Estonian movement of the *Maauks* [Earth-believers]. Krull has been fighting against the ongoing deforestation of the Estonian landscape, including going to the European Court as a plaintiff to change the law of renewable energy in the EU, without any success. He has offered a conclusive overview of his ecological ideas in a short manual *Tänapäeva askees* [Modern Asceticism] (2020).

‘Alice käis imedemaal’ [‘Alice went to Wonderland’] and ‘Päike ja kuu tahtsid abielluda’ [‘The sun and the moon wished to marry’] are from *Ava* [Opening] (2021). The collection does not have a continuous narrative structure, but is inspired by a Yanomami cosmological myth in which the earth was originally the fallen sky, while the previous earth sank underground. If we cannot stop it, the next sky will fall upon us again. While Alice certainly alludes to Lewis Carroll’s classic, the love story of the sun and the moon originates from Khanty mythology. Both poems have been translated by Adam Cullen.

‘Hõbedases metsas elab kuldne loom’ [‘A golden beast inhabits a silver forest’] and ‘Mu keha on mu esivanemate’ [‘My body is the dream of’] are part of *Euroopa* [Europe] (2018), a collection focused on the possible destiny of the continent. There are three possible outcomes: a bare survival, total collapse, and a mythical renewal. Two ghost stories, one Livonian and the other Estonian, represent survival and collapse, while a Nkamtci’nemux and Nlak’apamux’o’e myth from

North America represents renewal. The motif of Europa sacrificing a white bull has been elaborated by Robert Graves in his compendium *The Greek Myths* (1955). Both poems have also been translated by Adam Cullen.

‘tigu tõusis ja käis’ [‘the snail stood up and walked’] and ‘hüperaktiivsus’ [‘hyperactivity’] are from the collections *Sulalumi* [The Melting Snow] (2023) and *Hämaruse meelespea* [Twilight Remembrance] (2025), respectively. The idea of creating a valley by sleeping comes from the Estonian trickster tales, in which the trickster is sometimes called Jesus. The issue of hyperactivity needs no comment today. Both poems have been translated by the author.

‘Ariadne from Neanderthal’ is a lyrical theme for a transmedial artwork by Monika Mattiesen, featuring a hybrid instrument and four performers. The world premiere by Ensemble Musikfabrik took place in Cologne on 23 August 2024. The text in three parts was written simultaneously in German, Estonian, English, and Spanish (other languages were added later). The version published below is the author’s original English text.

Alice käis imedemaal / Alice went to Wonderland

Alice käis imedemaal
ta kasvas suureks
aga mängukaarte ei sallinud
eriti vastik oli ärtu emand
selle eemaldas Alice igast ette juhtunud pakist
ja pistis külmkappi sügavkülma
emandad jäätusid tõmbusid kahkjassiniseks

ühel päeval suitsetas Alice piipu
see oli väike india piip
heledast sandlipuust
ta täitis piibu uuesti süütas kaheksa korda
siis hakkas Alice'il palav ta tegi lahti
külmkapi ukse et jäätist võtta

tuppa astus pikk kahvatu näoga naine
ta huuled olid härmas silmalaugudel tuhkjas lumi
naine naeratas hambad helkivad ja läbipaistvad
nagu jääkuubikute rida
sa ootasid mind ütles ta
ja sirutas käe
peopesal väike sinine süda
selle võid sa nüüd endale võtta
see on ühe suure merikarbi hing
mille sa lapsena leidsid rannast
enam ei pea sa mere kohinat kartma

*

Alice went to Wonderland
she grew up
but loathed playing cards
she found the Queen of Hearts to be particularly vile
Alice always removed it from every deck she came across
and stuck it into the freezer
the queens froze turned waxen blue

one day Alice smoked a pipe
it was a little Indian pipe made of
light sandalwood
she refilled the pipe lit it eight times
then Alice felt hot she opened up
the freezer to grab ice cream

a tall pale-faced woman entered the room
her lips were frosted colourless snow on her eyelids
the woman smiled her teeth glittering and translucent
like a row of ice cubes

you were expecting me she said
and reached out a hand
in her palm a tiny blue heart
you may have this now
it is the soul of a great seashell
you found on the beach as a child
you needn't fear the sea's roar any longer

Päike ja kuu tahtsid abielluda / The sun and the moon wished to marry

päike ja kuu tahtsid abielluda
õhtuti kammis päike mererannas
oma kuldseid juukseid
ja heitis need sillana lainetele
varsti ilmuski kuu lõbus nagu herilane

maa all elas vanaeit
kes armastas kuud
ühel õhtul varastas ta mõõga ja lõi maa ihusse prao
kuupaistel ronis ta välja ja ütles
sinust peab saama minu mees

ei ütles päike kuu peab elama taevas
ta on minu kaaslane ja kõnnib vee peal
nad kaklesid rebisid kuud kuni see kärises
vanaeit lõi aga mõõgaga
ja krahmas kuu südame endale

nii sai päike mehe kellel polnud enam südant
ta on kahvatu kasvab ja kahaneb jälle
kuni kaob oma pesasse ära
see-eest on maa all ka öösiti küllalt valgust
kuu süda kiirgab ja näitab rändajale teed

aga merepõhja kukkunud mõõk
tuikab vetikate ja merikarpide all
ta igatseb kuu südant tagasi

*

the sun and moon wished to marry
in the evening the sun combed her golden locks
on the seaside
and cast them into the waves as a bridge
soon the moon appeared as joyful as a wasp

underground there lived an old crone
who loved the moon
one evening she stole a sword and cut a fissure into the body of the earth
by the light of the moon she climbed out and said
you are to become my husband

no said the sun the moon must live in the sky
he is my companion and walks on the water
they fought and pulled at the moon till it tore
the old crone struck with her sword
and seized the moon's heart for herself

thus the sun got a husband without a heart
he is pale grows and wanes again
until he vanishes into his nest
underground however there is light galore even at night
the moon's heart glows and shows travelers their way

but the sword that sank to the seabed
pulses beneath the seaweed and seashells
it yearns to have the moon's heart back

Hõbedases metsas elab kuldne loom / A golden beast inhabits a silver forest

Hõbedases metsas elab kuldne loom.
Tal on kuldsed hambad: kui ta hammustab,
jääb haava servale kuldne viirg,
kuldne okastraat, mis valusasti torgib,
isegi kuu ei keera seda ümber sõrme.
Ekslen metsas. Mu veri on punane nagu
vein. Poolmagus, mitte päris kuiv,
üks sõõm, ja sinu suu on must
nagu murjanil, ainsast sõõmust jääb huulile
tumepunane okastraat.

Kuldne loom tuleb. Ta on väsinud.
Väsinud, oi nii väsinud kuldne loom,
kuldne looming, ta astub ligi ja paljastab
hambad, paljastab oma punase suu.

Minu kael on rauast. Ma ei näita seda.
Hõbepuude oksad tilguvad tõrva.
Kas see oli meehaisune mets? Oli küll,
vaik nõrgub mööda tüvesid alla,
naksub, iga samm naksatab nagu traat.

*

A golden beast inhabits a silver forest.
Its teeth are golden: when it bites,
a golden band is left along the wound;
golden barbed wire that throbs painfully.
Not even the Moon wraps it around its finger.
I wander the forest. My blood is red like
wine. Semi-sweet, not quite dry,
one sip and your mouth is black
like a Nubian; dark red barbed wire
is left on your lips from that single sip.

The golden beast approaches. It is tired.
Tired, oh, such a tired golden beast,
a golden creation; it approaches and bares
its teeth, bares its red mouth.

My neck is made of iron. I do not expose it.
The branches of silver trees drip with tar.
Was it a honey-stenched forest? It was indeed,
sap seeps down the trunks,
they rasp, every step rasps like wire.

Mu keha on mu esivanemate / My body is the dream of

Mu keha on mu esivanemate
unenägu. Luu ja nahk, karvad
ja rasv: nemad nägid seda juba
ammu, aga mööda on läinud
nii vähe aega, et keegi ei usu
seda. Mu perse ei ole ilmaasjata
selline vetruv ja ümmargune:
keegi on tema peal juba tuhandeid
aastaid istunud, siis laenati kanni-
kad minule, ära kuluta neid
lihtsalt ära, kui istud, siis istu
mõnuga. Istu kohe mõttega.

Nõnda nüüd teengi. Aga mõte
ei püsi paigal. Nihelen. Tõusen
püsti, lähen akna juurde, uksest
välja, ruttan randa ja seal kõnnid
sina, imekaunis Euroopa, vana
pagana armuke, aga ütle, miks
sul see verine nuga on käes.

*

My body is the dream of
my ancestors. Bone and skin, hair
and fat: they saw it long ago,
but so little time
has passed that no one believes
it. My ass isn't bulbous and springy
just because: someone sat upon it for
thousands of years, then lent me
the cheeks – don't just wear
them down; when you sit, then sit
with pleasure. Sit with a purpose.

And so now, I do. But my thoughts
won't stay still. I fidget. I stand
up, go to the window, out
the door, hurry to the shore, and there
you walk – gorgeous Europa, the old
pagan's lover; but say, why do you
hold that bloody knife.

tigu tõusis ja käis / the snail stood up and walked

tigu tõusis ja käis
sest Jeesus ütles nõnda
tigu küsis: kulla Jeesus
kas tohib ma limpsin sind natuke

no muidugi vastas Jeesus ja heitis pikali
kõik teod tulid ta ihule maiustama
kus Jeesus norskas hakkasid ööbikud laulma
tema asemest saigi Ööbikuorg

väike roheline taim kerkis sõta seest
ja harvester ütles: mina olen tee tõde
ja surm

me läheme maailma äärele rääkisid teod
seal ripub ju Jeesus jalgupidi üles poodud
juuksed langevad alla nagu mürisev kosk

*

the snail stood up and walked
because Jesus told him so
the snail asked: dear Jesus
can I lick you a little

of course said Jesus and lay down
all the snails came to relish on his flesh
where Jesus snored the nightingales broke
into singing thus the Nightingale Valley was created

a tiny green plant sprout from the shit
and the harvester said: I am the way the truth
and the death

we shall go to the edge of the world said the snails
that's where Jesus is hanging upside down
his hair rushing roaring like a waterfall

hüperaktiivsus / hyperactivity

hüperaktiivsus
hüperpassiivsus
hüperreaalsus kui käitumis-
häire-
kell

mõtlemishäire tundmishäire
hüper

spiraalselt kulgevate
valgete tähnidega
sõna

hüper-
modernsus

ja ainult kaks mõistlikku
poliitikut
üle kolme põlvkonna

Greta Thunberg
Subcomandante Marcos

*

hyperactivity
hyperpassivity
hyperreality as a
behaviour-
al disorder
alert

thinking disorder feeling
disorder
hyper

a word made of
white spiralling
dots

hyper-
modernity

and just a couple
of sensible politicians
over three generations

Greta Thunberg
Subcomandante Marcos

Ariadne from Neanderthal

There will be a time for making changes. But no one is ready yet. People merely try to save anything that can be saved. But nothing can be saved anymore. It is already too late.

A human being has three souls: masculine, feminine, and one more, a primordial soul. This soul is older than humans themselves; it is as ancient as Neanderthals or even older. If the masculine and feminine souls don't know what to do, the Neanderthal soul comes to their aid. She is the Ariadne from Neanderthal.

Although we are not ready to make changes, the earth is always ready. The earth is waiting. But inside of the earth is a labyrinth unknown to us. Therefore, we need some guidance. The masculine and feminine souls cannot be this guide.

Ariadne from Neanderthal is the guide. The stuff of the new life will be woven on her loom. The sources of that stuff are very old. The patterns of that stuff will create the code for life. Mad honey, meli mænomenon, is a part of those patterns. Whoever has tasted it is awaited to attend the wedding of Dionysus and Ariadne.

1

the earth is a dream
the earth is a lucid dream
the earth is the nest of a lucid dream
the earth is the stuff of a lucid dream in the realm of waters

you are a thread
you are the nightfall of a thread
you are the nightfall of a thread red
you are the dark night of the life of a thread

ne an der ne
ne an der ne ne an
der thal ne ar

one man one woman and one
Neanderthal woman
one soul and one more soul and one
more soul
a Neanderthal soul

we'll weave by three we'll weave
you by three
we'll weave your dream your stuff we'll weave
the stuff of your dream in the realm of waters

ari ari
ari ari de ne
de ne de ar
ne an der ne

2

you step onto the earth as if onto a carpet
soul shivering under the bush shivering in the wind
a tiny plant sprouts by the nest in the wind

primula Ariadne's primula
globeflower Ariadne's globeflower
azalea azalea

meli mænomenon

you step onto green earth
as if onto a green carpet
a tiny soul sprouts under the bush surges under the bush
blooms under the bush and the stuff
of the earth is sleeping the pattern the code of the earth
is sleeping under the earth

3

the code of the red thread
the nightfall of the red thread over shimmering waters
green dawn of the waters inside the dark night

says the tired earth: I am sleeping
in the veins of the tired earth the mad honey
of the nightfall is sleeping

bumblebees buzzing in the calyxes of flowers
Ariadne from Neanderthal
and Dionysus the Old Pagan celebrate their wedding