

1976

# Lucky Luciano

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## Lucky Luciano

No, I won't talk of his deeds,  
I'll not pass judgment on him.  
There is Man's law for that.  
Besides,  
He has been dead for years.

All I want is to be a while in the atmosphere  
Of Castelamare.  
I want to enter his mood,  
As the afternoon passes  
And the sky presses on  
The bastard balconies of Palermo.

That is, I want to live  
Just for a short moment  
As if I were he,  
Not romanticizing,  
Not ascribing to him  
A glory he never possessed.

To catch every subtle shade,  
All the infinite nuances  
Of his innermost thoughts.  
And most of all,  
The fury that has consumed him  
Since he understood  
There is no institution stronger than the State.

And yet he was trapped  
Between his basic aversion  
To organized bodies  
And his thirst for power.

Perhaps I am mistaken  
And this is no trap  
But simply—  
You fear something, hate it  
And end up imitating it.

Dusk has faded.

His heart feels light.  
Life has fallen back,  
Slipping away like a deer.

So, I didn't want  
To idealize him,  
To number him among  
The great outlaws,  
To give him a place in History.  
All I wanted was  
To enter his mind for a moment.

August, 1974

*Translated by the author with Daniel Weissbort*

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BOGOMIL GJUŽEL / YUGOSLAVIA

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## Flood at the International Writer's Workshop

Since the sky started crying  
I haven't been out-of-doors for thirty-one days:  
By now the earth must be a pair of pliers  
With tatters of human flesh stuck to its jaws.

I imagine myself on a see-saw, balanced so lightly  
That if even an atom fell on it (let alone a bomb)  
I would be hurled like a stone from a catapult  
Straight back into the trap of Macedonia.

My people, are we God's voracious eye  
Suspended in the air like a traffic-light  
Which, as it blinks, directs the flow of nations?  
Right now I'm only that greedy eye of legend  
Which, on my side of the scale, outweighs the world.