1984

Gingerbread Heart

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Charles Simic

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Make me a dark long overcoat, tailor, overcoat of winter cloth the kind a single thread of winter won’t pierce, and dark, so that on it one won’t notice the cigarette ashes.

Make it of the same material as the dark trousers to last as long as I want them to, in them to visit many cities, villages and other out of the way places.

Make me a dark vest, o tailor, in which to sit at a feast table surrounded by happy faces, just so I can wear in one of its two button-holes the rich man’s rose.

Make me a dark jacket, tailor, with deep and wide pockets in which to clench my fists while watching the one they’re taking from my table under the trees that begin to shake after a few moments.

*translated by Charles Simic*