

Note: Translation for the parts in Romanian is
provided parallel to the text or in square brackets.

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All these compartmentalised selves

Unde să îi gădesc locul fiecăruia?

Where can I even find space for each of them?

You keep adding

Layer upon layer

Gaining new shadows

Gaining new losses with each new acquisition

De care dintre ele te desparti?

Pe care le lasi sa piara?

Which ones of you are you letting go of?

Letting fade?

~

It's almost like trying to reconstruct an event or past experience from memories -

It takes a while before you even realise that there are gaps.

And as much as it is an intellectual process, it is a somatic invocation as well.

And it melts into one all-covering patch blanket

Heavy, all-enveloping

Like your very own monster to carry around everywhere

Propria mea Creatura.

Carne din carnea mea.

My very own Creature

Flesh out of my own flesh

You've grown it, like a second skin

Now you have to wear it

Now you have to bear it.

~

Limba română.

Românește.

It's a dark red

Pulsating in my belly, in the midst of my core.

Romanian language.

Romanianly.

What does it activate for me, at different times when I speak it?

Acasă - taking the sounds, the meanings ALL for granted, parca toti muschii mei refuza sa faca orice efort in plus [Home – as if all of my muscles are subtracting themselves from the effort]

But when I am in a different country, the effort to pronounce correctly, to articulate, to represent my sound, the melody of it, to encapsulate all of my country's (remarkable – or not so much) history, mainly the notable parts, like a duty to bring light over the unknown, over the prejudiced, over the numb, the asleep.

O amorțire trează. Firească.

An awaken numbness. Unselfconscious, careless.

Words like 'numb' or 'asleep'

I feel them on the very surface of my skin, sometimes on the outside of me even, like I'm almost speaking outside of myself, but at the same time as if I am biting from the words like from a green fruit, swallowing them whole

Trying to grasp their meaning

Both on the outside of myself and inwards, deeply, almost like a quest to penetrate their meaning

Visceral, possessive.

And the dialect

The accents

It feels like the tip of my tongue and my brain firing up.

Bănăţean. Oltenesc. Belonging to my place and not really.

Of Banat region. Of Oltenia.

I am borrowing from my own grandmother's history,

borrowing her mannerisms, her fears, her passion, her assertiveness

It's like my chest is pulling me forward

Blinding my vision

Words rolling faster and faster as if in an attempt to be ahead of the world, of time, of thought itself, the Big One, the One Thought grasping us all, grasping us each, pinching us to try and seize consciousness.

But they're slipping away

When one lights up, the others fade

And I'm losing meaning

And the shapes bend and twist and turn into unrecognisable forms

And with them - the selves that I, each in its separate time, claimed as my own.

They're slipping away

I'm slipping away

Fiery red

Green

Acid orange that you can almost taste in your mouth,
that same sensation you get after gulping down a glass
of freshly squeezed juice Aaah!

Fiery red

Green and pale blue

Fiery red

Green and acid orange

Roşu aprins

Verde şi-albastru cernit

Roșu aprins
Verde și oranj acid

The rhythm of my everyday

Have you spoken it to people who don't understand you?
And what have they told you about it?
That it's rolling off your tongue like mmm, like honey
Or that it sounds like you're constantly arguing, in a continuous defensive tone
Is it conspiratorial?
A little threatening?
Or comforting enough but still with enough edge to keep you alert.

~

Cum se simte?

Să fi lăsat pe dinafară.

Afară.

Fără. Rr. FAH-RAH.

How does it feel?

To be left outside.

Out.

Without.

On the margins. Without. Like a red hot wire keeping you out.

So does the sound of it ignite that little wince, the same one you had back on the playground
when you were the last one picked in a team

The same one of watching from the sidelines

That little twinge that churns inside your guts and in the blink of an eye turns into a
declaration of war, a statement of superiority, a promise for retribution?

~

Here it comes again

The Super imposter syndrome

~

Another day

Another round

Same game

Same almost successful attempts to grasp it, bite from it whole, penetrate the meaning, make it yours - until someone pushes you back.

I want you to slap some meaning into me

Kiss some meaning into me

Like a whisper

But louder and louder, firmer and firmer with each breath

Until your rhythm matches mine

Simt cum mă desprind în două

Ca norii după furtună.

Plumb.

I feel like I'm dividing myself in two

Like clouds before the storm.

(Clouds of) lead.

Looking at rivers out the window of a train.

Ape ce se desprind și ele și uită pe unde au trecut

Sau fără vreun gând la unde urmează să ajungă.

Poduri.

What is this obsession with creating links?...

Why can't we just let things be, as they are, where they are.

Rivers that divide as well and forget where they had been

With no thought of where they will be reaching next, either.

Bridges.

~

I think I've left some spaces empty

For you to decide what fits

That was my intention

My test

A test for myself as well, unbeknownst to me

But I guess we've decided together, separately, each of our own accord,

That they are rather holes

Remains after tissue removal

Gangrenous

Diseased tissue

Carne vie ce trebuie extripată

Live flesh that requires excision

Înlăturată de acolo sub puterea bisturiului, cu orice
preț

Removal under the weight of the blade,
at any cost

We use these violent acts by default every day, after all

It's quicker.

By the blade of a knife or a scalpel

More sterile.

Mai elegant, chiar.

More elegant, even.

Să nu lăsăm vreo urmă, vreo cicatrice -

Not leaving any trace, any scars

For who would we be, to be going out there in the world bearing scars?

It all better be perfectly swiped under the preserves of the tightest make-up,

No room for spilling out of that contour.

~

I don't have to think about it

E ceva în mine ce știe.

Știe where it all fits, înainte să apuc eu să-mi dau seama

It can feel the pulse

And then something fires up inside

A connection

An alchemy

Sounds rounding up

Clashing on the angularity of other sounds

Shaping into being the very fibers of my thought.

It's alive.

I could have spelled that piercing, all-surrounding ache a thousand times, a thousand different ways in words that you would have understood, painting a portrait so clinical, so precise of the devastation you had left behind. Still it would have been nothing but sterile.

All of my insides were screaming in a different tongue, a different language. Mi se zguduia înlăuntrul de atâtea vorbe pe care ardeam să le spun în limba mea. [Everything was clashing within me from all the words I was burning to let erupt in my own tongue.] I was cursing and tearing ligaments from my heart, my flesh, all in that tongue, spouting curses and invoking some earthly forces, some celestial forces, some forces from beyond - Romanianly, imploring mercy.

M-ai lăsat cu sufletul defrișat

There is something inside me that knows
It knows where it all fits before I even awake
to it happening

You left me deforested.
Torn up by the roots.

Smuls din rădăcini

What a word, 'a smulge'. I look at it and marvel and the arrangement of the letters, the sounds of it. The whole anatomy of the word.

Displaced. Again.

Not knowing where I find myself.

Home wasn't a place I could look for, or expect to find, not physically anyway.

Unreal. Ungrounded. Fleeting.

Uprooted anew.

Torn between experiences which I should let go of gracefully, integrating them seamlessly into the fabric of existence - that infinite spiral made of all the experiences we should be living in a lifetime and be grateful for and accept them as essential - and my gripping, wretched, old - ancient!- ways, so deeply-seated in me since centuries before my time - growing through me like branches fără să le pot opri, fără să le mai pot ajunge din urmă [with no way for me to stop them, to reach out and catch up with them] and demanding satisfaction, the satisfaction demanded by generation after generation of women screaming their voices, their pain and injustice, through me.

This is the language I am talking about. The contradiction of selves that cannot exist without each other.

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You've grown it on you like a second skin

Now you have to wear it

Now you have to bear it

Carry it

Or have it carry you

Drag you
Bruise you in places
Scrap your extremities
Whenever there's a new corner to turn
Getting used to that metallic taste when its sap gushes out of you –
Because it feeds through itself.

But don't worry,
You can always crawl again
You'll do it all tomorrow, all over again, all of it.

Mâine – aceeași eu, alt mâine.

Același mâine, alt eu.

Acceași eu, alt mâine,

Același mâine, alta eu.

Tomorrow – same me, another tomorrow

The same tomorrow, a different me

Same me, a different tomorrow

The same tomorrow, another me.