

## Philosophies Libre&o by Royce Vavrek

### **Strange Land** A response to Anonymous Balle7e, Chanson pieuse, chanson de femme – XII centuy

*Amis, amis, Trop me laissez en estrange païs.  
Amis, amis, Trop me laissez en estrange païs.*

Ancient French : *My love, My love, You leave me  
too long in an alien land My love, My love, You  
leave me too long in an alien land*

1 You chose this place.  
Planted me up to my knees  
In store-bought soil.  
Kept me company  
As my toes produced roots,  
My feet petrified.

2 You chose this place.  
I will no longer be bound.  
I take the axe you leQ within reach,  
And self-liberate at mid-thigh.

You chose this place.  
Offered me three meals a day  
Combed my hair,  
Brushed my teeth.  
Suddenly restless... you ran!  
You took my appeNte with you.

SwiQ and brute chop.  
SwiQ and brute chop... ...and collapse.  
I crawl, Wriggle,  
Drag my way to you.  
Demand an answer:  
My love, my love,  
*Trop me laissez en estrange païs.*  
My love, my love,  
Why so long?  
My love, my love,  
Why in this strange land?

Fixed here, on this Nny plot,  
I wonder why you leQ me.  
Fully bonded to the dirt  
Engrained in this reality.  
My love, my love,  
Why in this strange land?

*Il m'apela ains que je l'apelasse,  
Si me request ainz qu'aprez lui alasse.  
Or est bien drois qu'enlui querre me lasse Si que  
cest mont pour lui trouver trespasse.  
Amis, amis, Trip me lassiez en estrange païs.*

You chose this place.  
Sold me on the view:  
This was your father's sky,  
Your mother's prairie,  
And I am the monument  
You no longer wish to see.

I am a mess of bark and blood.  
Now waiNng for judgement in heaven.  
Please hold me upright at the gates  
As I've forfeited the weight of my legs  
To the broken promises  
Of that strange land.

Fixed here, on this Nny plot,  
I wonder why you leQ me.  
Fully bonded to the dirt  
Engrained in this reality.  
My love, my love,  
Why in this strange land?

## **A Crocus's Laugh** A response to Rûmî, Lyric Ode, Ghazal n° 1393 – XIII century

This morning  
I had the urge to explode,  
A remarkable episode  
Came over me;  
A noteworthy episode  
For a flower:  
A laugh.

My petals are not hysterical.  
My leaves incapable of the simplest sounds.  
And yet... The urge was so great,  
Deep in my bulb's center.  
An eruption,  
A current of electric bliss.  
The loudest laugh.  
Obnoxious.  
EcstaNc.

مردہ بدم زنده شدم گریه بدم خنده شدم  
دولت عشق آمد و من دولت پاینده شدم  
[...]  
ن خندنده شدم  
گلش  
تو  
بنگر زک ارث خنده خود  
من و رد  
قمر رد  
توام ای شهره از

In Persian:

*I was dead, came back to life  
I wept, began to laugh  
Love's force came over me  
Fortune smiled on me forever  
[...]  
Gaze into me and in yourself for the traces of your  
smile  
have turned me to a field of laughing blossoms!*

What was so funny?  
I don't even know.  
I had the urge to explode.  
A crocus bomb.  
A remarkable episode  
Came over me:  
An astonishing episode...  
A laugh.  
Euphoric.  
Then silence.

## A Whoosh of Fire

A response to Khalil Gibran, *The Scarecrow* (1918) & *A Profile of the Art of Music* (1905)

When the farmer finds my head  
Occupied by the enemy,  
He will burn me.  
A small red lighter  
From his pocket,  
A flick,  
A flame.  
Immediate immolation.  
Dry straw.  
A whoosh of fire.

I submit to the claws  
And the wings,  
And the feathers.  
My straw-filled face  
Now your address.  
When the farmer finds my head  
Occupied by the enemy,  
He will burn me.  
A whoosh of fire.

وعندما يأتي الموت، ويُمثّل آخر مشهد من رواية الحياة، نسمة  
ع الموسيقى المحزنة، ونراها تملأ الجوّ بأشباح الأسي،  
في تلك الساعة الموحجة إذ تودّع النفس ساحل هذا العالم .  
الجميل، وتُسبّح في بحر الأبدية، تاركّة هيكلها اله

## An Arrowhead

A response to the Israëli Najara, *If I were* (XVI-XVII Century)

In Hebrew:

*If I were a spear and you thrust me into your  
enemies' hearts,  
I would be drunk with their blood.*

I am your weapon,  
An arrowhead  
Sent on a mission.  
My mouth wide,  
Braced for impact

Brazen birds,  
Closer and closer  
Taunting me:  
Closer and closer.  
I can't fight back.  
Assaulting me:  
I can't.  
Gouging me:  
I'm yours.  
Ripping me:  
Let this be done.  
I am a mockery.  
A mockery of fear.  
Let this all be done. Please.  
Done.

In Arabic :

*And when death comes, and it represents the last  
scene in the story of life, we hear sad  
music, and see it fill the air with ghosts of sorrow,  
in that painful hour when the soul bids  
farewell to the coast of this beautiful world, and  
swims in the sea of eternity, leaving its  
temple to God.*

For now  
I stand afool  
Of my life's choices,  
And only think of nesting  
And flying in circles      Around me.

לו אהיה רמח ואתה נותני  
תוך לב משנאיך בדםם אשקרה

In Hebrew:

*If I were a spear and you thrust me into your  
enemies' hearts,  
I would be drunk with their blood.*

Ready to chew through the skin  
Of your enemy.  
Now my enemy.

I am your weapon,  
My teeth viciously rip  
Through your prey.

My tongue  
Flushed with the blood  
Of this fool who wronged you.  
I am drunk.  
Red-drunk, woozy.  
This communion:  
A cannibalistic affair,  
His juice much more bitter  
Than yours.

### **Death Once, Death Twice** (Incarnations)

In response to Laura Vazquez, *Ce n'est pas parce que vous êtes morts une fois que vous ne mourrez plus*, XXI

#### **#1**

*À ton avis quel est le sentiment principal de l'existence*

*Ce qui forme un visage en fait comme l'air  
À l'intérieur d'un visage un vent spécial super solitaire*

In French :

*What do you think is the main feeling of the existence*

*What forms a face in fact like air*

*Inside a face a special super lonely wind*

#### **#2**

The first time I experienced death:

An unremarkable thing.

Ink filled my lungs

A bewildering poison.

My body becoming the body

Of a ball-point pen,

Or the arms of a beached mollusk.

Reincarnated, I was,

As a lifeless thing.

I am your weapon.  
An arrowhead  
Completed his mission.  
Tell me you love me.  
Tell me you love me.  
Tell me you love me.  
Then deploy me again.

#### **#3**

*Ce n'est pas parce que vous êtes mort une fois que vous ne mourrez plus*

In French :

*Just because you died once doesn't mean you won't die again*

#### **#4**

Disoriented, I woke.

I'm dead.

Death is handsome.

Death is to breathe

And have the air swirl about your body

An empty cage.

Death is to breathe without lungs.

To meditate without mind.

To sing without voice, let alone song.

I pray to next be reincarnated

As a blooming thing.

My dogma wrapped in a riddle:

A conundrum

Wrapped in the whorls.

My philosophies now fragrant.

My beliefs invading your sinuses.

My next incarnation is you.