

Never Too Young For a Good Retirement Plan

He leans out of the deck overhanging the auditorium
With the self-confidence of an experienced captain
Who braves a flood of students for the hundredth time.
He's perfectly aware that all the people here stand
In awe of his damn undeniable talent.
And he knows all too well how good he looks
When he speaks *ex cathedra* – an infallible Jewish Pope
With the subtle charisma of a politician
And the sexy look of a professional *tombeur de femmes*.
God, he's gorgeous in that purple silk tie.
I believe I have never seen so fine a scholar before.

As I let my imagination run away with me,
The girl sitting next to me suddenly elbows me in the ribs.
“Hey – she tells me. Did you know that he was *so* hot?”
I cannot help giggling.
I happen to kind of know her: she had always looked
Very serious before this unexpected comment.
Almost puritanical, I would say.
And then, she is so very young: she must be
A sophomore, if I am not mistaken.
I gently make fun of her by saying:
“Darling, do you know that he could be your grandfather?”

She looks pensive for awhile before replying:
“And do you know that if all grandfathers look like him
I am going to move to a fucking home?”

Prenatal Little Death

Watch the warm water run
and the foam puff up
in big loaves of pandesal.

Sip your sweet Yarden slowly,
as you dip your toes
in the steaming spume.

Let your fingers linger
on the texture of the thick pages
of the hardcover he gave you.

Don't worry now.
You still have time before drowning
in the billows of the insomniac bed.

Just surrender to the cuddle
of this porcelain womb.
You'll soon be born and die again.

Bells Ringing in Turku

For Gerry, if he wants it to be

You might want to know it's one in the morning,
And church bells are ringing in Turku.

You might want to know it's now mid-December,
And Turku is covered with snow.

You might want to know I am sitting by the window,
And I am letting Turku make a fool of me.

Turku is a Finnish prince who tells me beautiful lies
With strange and winning inflections.

You might want to know he says the Moon is a pastry chef
Who right now is frosting the pond in the garden down there.

You might want to know my Prince seems to be right:
I could mistake it for an iced cake, and take a bite.

You might want to know that, as I wonder how it might taste like,
A strange noise shuts up the bells and distracts me from my reveries.

Prince Turku's courtship has just been interrupted:
A toad is croaking to the moon, leaping around the pond.

You might want to know what I'm thinking of now:
Turku is an imaginary garden with real toads in it.

You might want to know that I sometimes dream of Princes and gardens,
But in the morning I am happy to wake up to reality.

You might want to know that I'll spend the rest of the night
Listening to the little toad's extravagant song.

Some people will say it sounds earthy,
Some other may say it sounds weird.

But as I listen to the little toad singing to the Moon,
I see it, too, is wooing its own Princess –

You might want to know that its humble song
To me sounds more heartfelt than Turku's sweet talk.