

Collected Poems

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Chapter I

1925

You are so silly.	I
You run like the morning wind,	2
sometime you'll be knocked down by a car.	3
By the way, I scrubbed clean my little table,	4
and now the tender light of my bread shines purer.	5
Well, come back; if you want	6
I'll buy a blanket for my iron bed.	7
A plain, grey blanket.	8
It will suit my Poverty, who loves you,	9
and the Lord loves you also very much,	10
and He also loves me.	II
The Lord never comes in a blaze of glory,	12
He doesn't want to ruin my eyes,	13
which long to see you,	14
and will look at you very beautifully.	15
When you come back, I will kiss you carefully,	16
I won't rip off your coat.	17
I will tell you all the many jokes,	18
because I devised many since then,	19
and how merry you'll be and blush,	20
how you'll look down to the ground,	21
and we will crack up,	22
and we will be heard by our neighbours	23
and even by the taciturn, austere day labourers	24
who, amidst their tired, shattered dreams,	25
will then begin to smile too.	26

Autumn

French

Ne sois pas si bête.	I
Tu cours comme le vent matinal,	2
un jour tu seras renversée par une auto.	3
D'ailleurs, j'ai récuré ma petite table,	4
et maintenant la lumière suave de mon pain est plus pure.	5
Hé bien, reviens; si tu veux	6
j'achèterai une couverture pour mon lit de fer.	7
Une couverture ordinaire, grise.	8
Elle conviendra à ma Pauvreté, qui t'aime,	9
et le Seigneur t'aime aussi beaucoup	10
et Il m'aime aussi.	II
Le Seigneur ne vient jamais dans toute sa splendeur,	12
Il ne veut pas abîmer mes yeux,	13
qui ont hâte de te voir	14
et qui te regarderont avec beauté.	15
Quand tu reviendras, je t'embrasserai doucement,	16
je n'arracherai pas ton manteau.	17
Je te raconterai toutes les nouvelles blagues,	18
parce que j'en ai inventé beaucoup depuis,	19
et que tu seras gaie et rougieras,	20
et tu baisseras les yeux vers le sol,	21
et nous éclaterons de rire,	22
et nos voisins nous entendrons	23
et jusqu'aux journaliers taciturnes et austères	24
qui, parmi leurs rêves fatigués et brisés,	25
esquisseront un sourire aussi.	26

Automne

Spanish

No seas tonta.	I
Corres como el viento de la madrugada,	2
algún día te atropellará un coche.	3
De hecho, fregué mi mesita,	4
y ahora la luz suave de mi pan brilla más pura.	5
Pues regresa; si quieres	6
compraré una manta para mi cama de hierro.	7
Una manta ordinaria, gris.	8
Le caerá bien a mi Pobreza, que te quiere,	9
y el Señor también te ama,	10
y me ama también.	II
El Señor nunca viene con gran esplendor,	12
no quiere arruinar mis ojos,	13
que anhelan verte,	14
y que te mirarán con belleza.	15
Cuando regreses, te besaré con cuidado,	16
no te arrancaré el abrigo.	17
Te contaré todos los nuevos chistes,	18
porque hallé muchos desde entonces,	19
y qué alegre te pondrás y te sonrojarás,	20
y cómo mirarás al suelo,	21
y nos reiremos a carcajadas,	22
y nos oirán nuestros vecinos	23
y hasta los taciturnos y austeros jornaleros	24
que, entre sus sueños cansados y quebrados,	25
empezarán a sonreirse también.	26

Otoño

Original Hungarian

Olyan ¹	bolond ²	vagy ³	I
szaladsz ⁴			2
akár ⁵	a reggeli ⁶	szél. ⁷	3
Még ⁸	elüt ⁹	valamelyik ¹⁰ autó. ¹¹	4
Pedig ¹²	lesikáltam ¹³	kis ¹⁴ asztalomat ¹⁵	5
és most ¹⁶			6
tisztábban ¹⁷	világít ¹⁸	kenyerem ¹⁹ enyhe ²⁰ fénye. ²¹	7
No ²²	gyere ²³	vissza, ²⁴ ha ²⁵ akarod ²⁶	8
veszek ²⁷	takarót ²⁸	vaságyamra. ²⁹	9
Egyszerű, ³⁰	szürke ³¹	takarót.	10

¹ arch. pron. *oly* ‘such/so’ + deadj. adv.-forming *-an* → ‘such a/an’

² adj. ‘silly/foolish’

³ vb. *van* ‘to be’ + 2nd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

⁴ vb. *szalad* ‘to run’ + 2nd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef. *-sz*

⁵ lit. ‘just like’

⁶ *reggel* ‘morning’ + adj.-forming *-i*

⁷ ‘wind’

⁸ adv. ‘moreover/later/sometime’

⁹ vb. pref. *el-* ‘away’ + vb. *üt* ‘to hit’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

¹⁰ pron. pref. *vala* ‘some-’ + inter. *myelik* ‘which/what’ → ‘one/any of’

¹¹ ‘car’

¹² conj. expressing contrast ‘whereas/but/although’ or addition ‘and (by contrast)’

¹³ vb. pref. *le-* completion/downward + vb. *sikál* ‘to scrub/scour (out)’ + 1st pers. sg. ind. past.def.

-am

¹⁴ adj. ‘small’

¹⁵ *asztal* ‘table’ + 1st pers. sg. single poss. *-(o)m* + acc. *-(a)t*

¹⁶ adv. ‘now’

¹⁷ adj. *tiszta* ‘clean/clear’ + comp. *-bb* + deadj. adv.-forming *-am* → ‘more clearly/cleanly’

¹⁸ *világ* ‘light (arch.)/world’ + caus. vb.-forming *-ít* ‘to make smth ...-like’ + 1st pers. sg. ind. pres. indef. ‘to make shine’

¹⁹ *kenyér* ‘bread’ + 1st pers. sg. single poss. *-em*

²⁰ *enyh* ‘light/mild/tender/faint’ + 3rd pers. sg. single poss. *-e* ‘of’

²¹ *fény* ‘light’ + 3rd pers. sg. single poss. *-e*

²² interj. ‘well/now’

²³ vb. *jön* ‘to come’ + 2nd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

²⁴ adv. ‘back[wards]’

²⁵ conf. ‘if’ + cond. or ‘when/once’

²⁶ vb. *akar* ‘to want’ + 2nd pers. sg. ind. pres. def. *-od*

²⁷ vb. *vesz* ‘to take/grab/buy/get/consider/put on’ + 1st pers. sg. ind. pres. indef. *-ek*

²⁸ vb. *takar* ‘to cover (protect)’ + pres. part. *-ó* → ‘cover/blanket’ + acc. *-t*

²⁹ *vas* ‘iron’ + *ágy* ‘bed’ + 1st pers. sg. single poss. *-am* + subl. *-ra* ‘onto/on’

³⁰ *egy* ‘one’ + *-szerű* ‘-like’ → ‘plain/simple/unadorned/humble (< 1945)’

³¹ adj. ‘grey’

Illik ³² az	II
szegénységemhez, ³³ aki ³⁴ szeret ³⁵ téged ³⁶	I2
és az Úr ³⁷ is szereti ³⁸ nagyon ³⁹	I3
és engem ⁴⁰ is szeret ⁴¹ az Úr	I4
nem jön ⁴² soha ⁴³ nagy ⁴⁴ fényességgel ⁴⁵	I5
Nem akarja, ⁴⁶ hogy elromoljanak ⁴⁷	I6
szemeim, ⁴⁸ akik ⁴⁹	I7
nagyon ⁵⁰ kívánnak ⁵¹ látni ⁵² téged. ⁵³	I8
És nagyon ⁵⁴ szépen ⁵⁵ néznek ⁵⁶ majd ⁵⁷ terád ⁵⁸	I9
ha ⁵⁹ visszajössz ⁶⁰	20
vigyázva ⁶¹ foglak ⁶² megcsókolni, ⁶³	21

³² vb. ‘to suit/match/fit’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

³³ *szegény* ‘poor’ + noun-forming *-ség* (state of being) + 1st pers. sg. single poss. *-em* + allat. *-bez* ‘to’

³⁴ conj. ‘who’

³⁵ vb. ‘to love’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

³⁶ pron. *te* ‘you’ sg. + acc.

³⁷ ‘Lord’ (the Christian god)

³⁸ vb. *szeret* ‘to love’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef. *-i*

³⁹ adj. *nagy* ‘great’ + adv.-forming *-on* → ‘very (to a high degree)’

⁴⁰ pron. *én* ‘I’ + acc. → ‘me’

⁴¹ vb. ‘to love’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

⁴² vb. ‘to come’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

⁴³ adv. ‘never’

⁴⁴ adj. ‘great’

⁴⁵ *fény* ‘light’ + adj.-forming *-es* ‘with/having’ → ‘bright’ + noun-forming *-ség* (state of being) → ‘brightness’ + instr. *-vel* ‘with’ (*-gel* after consonant *g*) → ‘with brightness’

⁴⁶ vb. ‘to want’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef. *-ja*

⁴⁷ perfect. vb. pref. *el-* + vb. *romlik* ‘to break down/deteriorate’ + 3rd pers. pl. subj. indef. *-janak*

⁴⁸ *szem* ‘eye’ + 1st pers. sg. mult. poss. *-eim*

⁴⁹ pron. ‘who’ + pl. *-k*

⁵⁰ adj. *nagy* ‘great’ + adv.-forming *-on* → ‘very (to a high degree)’

⁵¹ vb. *kíván* ‘to wish’ + 3rd pers. pl. ind. pres. indef. *-nak*

⁵² vb. *lát* ‘to see’ + inf. *-ni*

⁵³ pron. *te* ‘you’ sg. + acc.

⁵⁴ adj. *nagy* ‘great’ + adv.-forming *-on* → ‘very (to a high degree)’

⁵⁵ adj. *szép* ‘beautiful’

⁵⁶ vb. *néznek* ‘to look at smth.’ + 3rd pers. pl. ind. pres. indef. *-nek*

⁵⁷ adv. ‘sometime/later’

⁵⁸ pron. sg. *te* ‘you’ (here emph.) + pron. *rá* + 2nd pers. sg. ‘on/of you’

⁵⁹ conf. ‘if’ + cond. or ‘when/once’

⁶⁰ vb. pref. *vissza-* ‘back-’ + vb. *jön* ‘to come’ + 2nd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef. *-sz*

⁶¹ vb. *vigyáz* ‘to protect/pay attention’ + adv. part. *-va* result of action or simultaneous actions

⁶² vb. aux. *fog* ‘to will’ + 1st pers. sg. ind. pres. 2nd obj. *-lak* ‘you’

⁶³ perfect. vb. pref. *meg-* + vb. *csókol* ‘to kiss’ + inf. *-ni*

nem tépem ⁶⁴ le ⁶⁵ rólad ⁶⁶ a kabátot ⁶⁷	22
és elmondom ⁶⁸ mind ⁶⁹ a sok ⁷⁰ tréfát, ⁷¹	23
mert ⁷² sokat ⁷³ kieszeltem ⁷⁴ azóta, ⁷⁵	24
hogy te ⁷⁶ is ⁷⁷ örülj, ⁷⁸	25
majd ⁷⁹ elpirulsz, ⁸⁰	26
lenézel ⁸¹ a földre ⁸² és kacagunk ⁸³	27
hangosan, ⁸⁴ hogy behallatszik ⁸⁵ szomszédunkba ⁸⁶	28
a szótlan, ⁸⁷ komoly ⁸⁸ napszámosokhoz ⁸⁹ is behallik ⁹⁰	29
és fáradt, ⁹¹ összetört ⁹²	30
álmukban ⁹³ majd ⁹⁴ elmosolyodnak ⁹⁵ ők ⁹⁶ is. ⁹⁷	31

Ősze

-
- ⁶⁴ vb. *tép* ‘to tear/rend’ + 1st pers. sg. ind. pres. def. -em
⁶⁵ comp. ‘down’
⁶⁶ pron. *róla* ‘about/off her’ + 2nd pers. sg.
⁶⁷ *kabát* ‘coat’ + acc. -(o)t
⁶⁸ vb. *elmond* ‘to tell’ + 1st pers. sg. ind. pres. def. -om
⁶⁹ pron. sg. ‘all/each of’
⁷⁰ adj. ‘many’
⁷¹ *tréfá* ‘joke’ + acc. -(a)t
⁷² conj. ‘because’
⁷³ *sok* ‘many’ + acc. -at
⁷⁴ vb. *kieszel* ‘to devise’ + 1st pers. sg. past. -tem
⁷⁵ art. *az* ‘that’ + óta ‘since’ → ‘since then’
⁷⁶ pron. sg. ‘you’
⁷⁷ doublet of és ‘and’, adv. ‘also’
⁷⁸ vb. *örül* ‘to rejoice’ + 2nd pers. sg. subj. indef. -j
⁷⁹ adv. ‘sometime/later’
⁸⁰ perfect. vb. pref. *el-* + vb. *pirul* ‘to blush’ + 2nd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef. -sz
⁸¹ vb. ‘to look down’ + 2nd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef. -el
⁸² *föld* ‘earth/ground’ + subl. -re ‘onto’
⁸³ vb. *kacag* ‘to laugh (a lot)’ + 1st pers. pl. ind. pres. indef. -unk
⁸⁴ adv. ‘loudly’
⁸⁵ vb. pref. *be-* ‘inwardly’ + vb. *hall* ‘to hear’ + caus. -at + vb.-forming -szik → ‘to cause to sound in’
⁸⁶ *szomszéd* ‘neighbour’ + 1st pers. pl. single poss. -unk + illative -ba ‘into’
⁸⁷ *szó* ‘word/voice’ + privative adj.-forming -tlan ‘less’
⁸⁸ adj. ‘severe/austere’
⁸⁹ *napszámos* ‘day labourer’ + pl. -(o)k + allat. ‘-hoz ‘towards’
⁹⁰ syn. *behallatszik*
⁹¹ vb. *fárad* ‘to tire’ + past. part. -t
⁹² *össze* ‘together’ + vb. *tör* ‘to break’ + past. part. -t
⁹³ *ádom* ‘dream’ + 3rd pers. pl. single poss. -uk + innes. -ban ‘in’
⁹⁴ adv. ‘sometime/later’
⁹⁵ vb. inf. *elmosolyodni* ‘to start to smile’ + 3rd pers. ind. pres. indef.
⁹⁶ pron. ‘they’
⁹⁷ doublet of és ‘and’, adv. ‘also’

Chapter 2

1933

Freight trains switching; the dreamy clanking claps the mute landscape in light handcuffs.	1 2 3 4 5
The moon soars effortlessly, like a prisoner set free.	6 7 8
The crushed stones lie in their own shadow, they sparkle for themselves, they are in their place like never before.	9 10 11 12 13 14
What shard of the vast nighttime is this heavy night, that it falls down on us like a chunk of iron on the dust?	15 16 17 18 19
Desire born of the sun! When shadows fall on the bed, could you too stay awake the whole night?	20 21 22 23 24
At the front of the warehouse a dusty lamp burns. It is just visible, not luminous, such is wishful thinking:	25 26 27 28

it blinks brightly,
but the sky is a vast dead light.

29

30

Tehervonatok ¹ tolatnak, ²	I
a méla ³ csörömpölés ⁴	2
könnyű ⁵ bilincseket ⁶ rak ⁷	3
a néma ⁸ tájra. ⁹	4
	5
Oly ¹⁰ könnyen ¹¹ száll ¹² a hold, ¹³	6
mint ¹⁴ a fölszabadult. ¹⁵	7
	8
A megtört ¹⁶ kövek ¹⁷	9
önnön ¹⁸ árnyukon ¹⁹ fekszenek, ²⁰	10
csillognak ²¹	II
maguknak, ²²	12
úgy ²³ a helyükön ²⁴ vannak, ²⁵	13
mint ²⁶ még ²⁷ soha. ²⁸	14
	15

¹ *teher* ‘freight’ + vb. *von* ‘to pull/draw’ + noun-forming *-at* → ‘freight train’ + pl. *-(o)k*

² vb. *tol* ‘to reverse/back up’ + caus. *-at* ‘to make smth/smb do smth’ + 3rd pers. pl. ind. pres. indef.

³ ‘dreamy/pensive’

⁴ vb. *csörömpöl* ‘to clank’ + vb. noun-forming *-és* → ‘clanking’

⁵ *könnyű* ‘simple/easy/light’

⁶ *bilincs* ‘handcuff/shackle’ + pl. acc. *-eket*

⁷ vb. ‘to put/set’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

⁸ ‘silent/mute’

⁹ *táj* ‘landscape/region’ + subl. *-ra* ‘on/onto’

¹⁰ arch. pron. *oly* ‘so’

¹¹ *könnyű* ‘easy/light’ + super. *-en* ‘on’ → ‘effortlessly/easily’

¹² vb. *száll* ‘to fly’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

¹³ ‘moon’

¹⁴ ‘like’

¹⁵ vb. pref. *föl-* completion (see also *fel-*) + *szabad* ‘free’ + vb.-forming *-ul* → ‘to set free/escape’ + past part. *-t*

¹⁶ perfect. vb. pref. *meg-* + vb. *tör* ‘to break/crush’ + past. part. *-t*

¹⁷ *kő* ‘stone’ + pl. *-(e)k*

¹⁸ arch. emph. poss. adj. by duplication of pers. pron. *ön* (3rd pers. sg.) → ‘one’s own’

¹⁹ *árny* ‘shadow/ghost’ + 3rd pers. pl. single-poss. *-uk* + super. *-(o)n* ‘on’

²⁰ vb. inf. *fekszik* ‘to lie (horizontally)’ + 3rd pers. pl. ind. pres. indef. *-enek*

²¹ vb. *cíllög* ‘to glitter’ + 3rd pers. pl. ind. pres. indef.

²² *mag(a)* ‘oneself’ + 3rd pers. pl. *-uk* + dat. *-nak*

²³ adv. ‘so (in this/that manner)’; *úgy ... mint ...* ‘like’

²⁴ *hely* ‘place/space’ + 3rd pers. pl. single-poss. *-ük* ‘their’ + super. *-ön* ‘on’

²⁵ vb. *van* ‘to be’ + 3rd pers. pl. ind. pres. indef.

²⁶ conj. ‘like’

²⁷ adv. ‘yet/still/otherwise’

²⁸ adv. ‘never’

Milyen ²⁹ óriás ³⁰ éjszaka ³¹	16
szilánkja ³² ez a súlyos ³³ ej, ³⁴	17
mely ³⁵ úgy ³⁶ hull ³⁷ le ³⁸ ránk, ³⁹	18
mint ⁴⁰ a porra ⁴¹ a vasszilánk? ⁴²	19
	20
Napszülte ⁴³ vágy! ⁴⁴	21
Ha ⁴⁵ majd ⁴⁶ árnyat ⁴⁷ fogad ⁴⁸ az ágy, ⁴⁹	22
abban ⁵⁰ az egész ⁵¹ ejben ⁵²	23
is ⁵³ ébren ⁵⁴	24
maradnál? ⁵⁵	25
	26
A raktár ⁵⁶	27
előtt ⁵⁷ poros ⁵⁸ lámpa ⁵⁹ ég. ⁶⁰	28

²⁹ pron. ‘what’³⁰ noun/adj. ‘giant/huge/vast’³¹ ej ‘night’ + szaka ‘period of’ → ‘at night/nighttime/night’³² szilánk ‘chip/shard/splitter’ + 3rd pers. sg. single-poss. -ja³³ súly ‘weight’ + adj.-forming -os → adj. ‘severe/austere’³⁴ ‘night’³⁵ literary, ‘which/that’³⁶ adv. ‘so (in this/that manner)'; úgy ... mint ...³⁷ vb. ‘to fall’, alt. bullik + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.³⁸ adv. ‘down’³⁹ pron. rá ‘upon/on/unto him/her/it’ + 1st pers. pl. poss. single-poss. -nk ‘our’ → ‘us/on us’⁴⁰ ‘like’⁴¹ por ‘dust’ + subl. -ra ‘onto’⁴² vas ‘iron’ + szilánk ‘shard’⁴³ nap ‘sun/day’ + vb. szül ‘to give birth/bear’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. past def. -te⁴⁴ ‘desire/longing’⁴⁵ conf. if? + cond. or ‘when/once’⁴⁶ adv. ‘sometime/later’⁴⁷ árny ‘shadow/ghost’ + acc. -t⁴⁸ vb. ‘to receive’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.⁴⁹ ‘bed’⁵⁰ az ‘that’ + innes. -ban ‘in’⁵¹ adj./adv. ‘whole/wholly’⁵² ej ‘night’ + innes. -ben ‘in’⁵³ doublet of és ‘and’, adv. ‘also’⁵⁴ adv. ‘awake’⁵⁵ vb. marad ‘to stay/remain (also state of being)’ + 2nd pers. sg. cond. pres. indef.⁵⁶ ‘warehouse’⁵⁷ elő ‘the front (of smth.)’ + locat. -tt⁵⁸ por ‘dust’ + adj.-forming -os → ‘dusty’⁵⁹ ‘lamp’⁶⁰ vb. ‘to burn/be lit’

Csak ⁶¹ látszik, ⁶² nem világít, ⁶³	29
ilyen ⁶⁴ az ész, ⁶⁵ ha ⁶⁶ áhit. ⁶⁷	30
Pislog ⁶⁸ élénken, ⁶⁹ holott ⁷⁰	31
nagy halott ⁷¹	32
fény ⁷² az ég. ⁷³	33

⁶¹ adv. ‘only/just’

⁶² vb. *lát* ‘to see’ + vb.-forming *-szik* → ‘to be visible/to appear’

⁶³ *világ* ‘light (arch.)/world’ + vb.-forming *-ít* → ‘to shine’

⁶⁴ det. ‘such’

⁶⁵ ‘mind’

⁶⁶ conf. ‘if’ + cond. or ‘when/once’

⁶⁷ vb. ‘to wish (for smth.)’

⁶⁸ vb. ‘to blink’

⁶⁹ vb. *él* ‘to live/exist’ + rare adj.-forming *-éenk* + super. *-en* ‘on’ → ‘lively’

⁷⁰ adv. arch. ‘where’; conj. lit. ‘though/but/for/since’

⁷¹ noun/adj. ‘dead’

⁷² *fény* ‘light’

⁷³ *ég* ‘sky’

Chapter 3

1934

3.1 Consciousness (*Eszmélet*)

I

Dawn unbinds sky from earth	1
and upon its clear, soft word	2
beetles and children	3
spin forth into the daylight;	4
there is no moisture in the air,	5
the bright levity floats!	6
Overnight they alighted on the trees	7
like small butterflies, the leaves.	8

French

L'aube détache le ciel de la terre	1
et, au son de sa voix claire et douce,	2
scarabées et enfants virevoltent	3
en entrant sur la scène du jour;	4
l'air n'est pas humide,	5
la brillante légèreté flotte!	6
Avec la nuit, elles se posèrent sur les arbres	7
comme de petits papillons, les feuilles.	8

Spanish

El amanecer desata el cielo de la tierra	I
y, al son de su voz clara y suave,	2
escarabajos y niños entran	3
y giran en la luz del día;	4
el aire no es húmedo,	5
¡la brillante levedad flota!	6
Con la noche se asentaron en los árboles	7
como pequeñas mariposas, las ojas.	8

Original Hungarian

Földtől ¹ eloldja ² az eget ³	I
a hajnal ⁴ s ⁵ tiszta ⁶ , lágy ⁷ szavára ⁸	2
a bogarak, ⁹ a gyerekek	3
kipörögnek ¹⁰ a napvilágra ¹¹ ;	4
a levegőben ¹² semmi pára ¹³ ,	5
a csilló ¹⁴ könnyűség ¹⁵ lebeg! ¹⁶	6
Az éjjel ¹⁷ rászálltak ¹⁸ a fákra, ¹⁹	7
mint ²⁰ kis ²¹ lepkék, ²² a levelek. ²³	8

¹ *föld* ‘earth’ + abl. *-től* ‘without/from’

² vb. pref. *el-* ‘away’ + vb. *old* ‘to unbind’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. def. *-ja*

³ *égi* ‘sky’ + acc. *-et* → *eget*

⁴ ‘dawn’

⁵ poetic abbrv. *es* ‘and’ (does not count as a syllable)

⁶ adj. ‘bright’

⁷ adj. ‘soft’

⁸ *szó* ‘voice’, ‘word’ + 3rd pers. sg. single poss. *-a* → *szava* + subl. *-ra* ‘by’ → *szavára*

⁹ *bogár* ‘beetle’ + pl. *-(a)k* → *bogarak*

¹⁰ vb. *kipörög* ‘to spin’ + 3rd pers. pl. ind. pres. indef. *-nek*

¹¹ *nap* ‘sun/day’ + *világ* ‘world’ + subl. *-ra* ‘onto’

¹² *levegő* ‘air’ + innes. *-ben* ‘in’

¹³ ‘moisture/mist’

¹⁴ vb. *csillog* ‘to glitter’ + adj.-forming *-o* → *csilló*; usually *csillogó*

¹⁵ *könnyű* ‘simple/easy/light’ + noun-forming *-ség* (state of being)

¹⁶ vb. *lebeg* ‘to float (in the air)’, 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

¹⁷ poetic *éj* ‘night’ + instr. *-vel* ‘with’ → *éjjel*

¹⁸ pointed action *rá* ‘on’ + vb. *száll* ‘to fly/land/to come down’ + 3rd pers. sg. past indef. *-tak*

¹⁹ *fa* ‘tree’ + pl. *-k* + subl. *-ra* ‘onto’ → *fákra*

²⁰ conj. ‘like’

²¹ ‘small’

²² *lepké* ‘butterfly’ + pl. *-k* → *lepkék*

²³ *level* ‘leaf’ + pl. *-(e)k*

Chiastic structure:

1-4: e-e(8)/á-ra(9)/e-e(8)/á-ra(9)

5-8: á-ra(9)/e-e(8)/á-ra(9)/e-e(8)

II

I saw paintings daubed with blue,	1
red, yellow in my dreams	2
and felt that everything was just so —	3
not one speck of dust flying madly about.	4
Now my dream comes down as a blur into my members,	5
and the iron world is the order.	6
During the day a moon rises inwardly and,	7
when the night is out, a sun shines herewithin.	8

Cursory remark

Verses 1-4 are about the night, verses 5-7 transition to the day, and verse 8 brings us back to the night — this cyclic structure supporting the mismatched, recurring alternance of days and nights.

French

J'ai vu des tableaux barbouillés de bleu,	1
rouge et jaune dans mes rêves	2
et je sentis que tout était en ordre —	3
pas un seul grain de poussière qui vole follement.	4
Maintenant mon rêve descend, estompé, dans mes membres,	5
et le monde de fer est l'ordre.	6
Avec le jour, une lune point en moi et,	7
à la nuit tombée, un soleil brille ci-dedans.	8

Spanish

Vi cuadros embadurnados con azul,	1
rojo y amarillo en mis sueños	2
y sentí que todo estaba en orden —	3
ni una sola mota de polvo que vuela locamente.	4
Ahora mi sueño se pone, esfumado, en mis miembros,	5
y el mundo de hierro es el orden.	6
Con el día, una luna sale en mí y,	7
al llegar la noche, un sol brilla aquí dentro.	8

Original Hungarian

Kék, piros, sárga, összekent ²⁴	I
képeket ²⁵ láttam ²⁶ álmaimban ²⁷	2
és úgy éreztem, ²⁸ ez a rend ²⁹ —	3
egy szalló ³⁰ porszem ³¹ el ³² nem hibbant. ³³	4
Most homályként ³⁴ száll ³⁵ tagjaimban ³⁶	5
álmom s a vas ³⁷ világ a rend.	6
Nappal ³⁸ hold ³⁹ kél ⁴⁰ bennem ⁴¹ s ha ⁴² kinn ⁴³ van	7
az éj ⁴⁴ — egy nap süt ⁴⁵ idebent. ⁴⁶	8

Chiastic structure:

1-4: e-ent(8)/ai-an(9)/a-rend(8)/i-an(9)

5-8: i-an(9)/a-rend(8)/ai-an(9)/e-ent(8)

²⁴ össze ‘together’ + ken ‘smear’ → összeken + 3rd pers. sg. past indef. -t

²⁵ kép ‘picture’ + pl. -(e)k + acc. -(e)t

²⁶ vb. lát ‘to see’ + short base -t + 1st pers. sg. past def. -tam

²⁷ álom ‘dream’ + 1st pers. sg. poss. -a + poss. pl. -i + 1st pers. sg. pers. -m + innes. -ban ‘in’ → álmaimban

²⁸ vb. érez ‘to feel’, 1st pers. sg. past def.

²⁹ ‘order’

³⁰ vb. száll ‘to fly’ + pres. part. -ó

³¹ por ‘dust’ + szem ‘eye/speck’

³² el nem + past. part.; the verbal prefix el- emphasises the completion of the action

³³ vb. hibban ‘to become imbalanced’, arch. + past part. -t

³⁴ homály ‘blur’ + essive formal -ként ‘as’

³⁵ vb. ‘to land/to come down’, 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres.

³⁶ tag ‘member’ + 1st pers. sg. poss. -(f)a + poss. pl. -i + 1st pers. sg. pers. -m + innes. -ban ‘in’ → tagjaimban

³⁷ ‘iron’

³⁸ nap ‘day’ + instr. -val ‘with’ → nappal

³⁹ ‘moon’

⁴⁰ vb. ‘to rise’, 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. def., arch. alt. kel

⁴¹ pron. benne ‘inside smth/smb’ + 1st pers. sg. pers. -m

⁴² ‘when’

⁴³ ‘outside’

⁴⁴ ‘night’

⁴⁵ vb. ‘to roast/shine’, 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

⁴⁶ adv. ide ‘here’ + bent ‘within’

III

I am thin, at times I only eat bread;	1
amidst those idle and blithering souls,	2
I seek in vain more certainty, like the die.	3
No chuck roast reaches my mouth	4
while I cuddle a small child to my heart —	5
however clever, the cat cannot catch at once	6
the mouse outdoors and the one indoors.	7

Cursory remark

J cannot pursue his art and, at the same time, keep a job that would put real food on his table. Cuddling a small child to his heart is his metaphor for the creation of poetry. J is the cat in verses 6-7.

French

Je suis maigre, parfois je ne mange que du pain ;	1
entouré par ces âmes oisives et bavardes,	2
je cherche en vain plus de certitude, comme le dé.	3
Aucun rôti de palette ne trouve ma bouche	4
quand j'étreins un enfant sur mon cœur —	5
aussi fûté soit-il, le chat ne peut attraper d'un coup	6
la souris dehors et celle dedans.	7

Spanish

Estoy flaco, a veces sólo como pan;	1
rodeado por esas almas ociosas y facundas,	2
busco en vano más certidumbre, como el dado.	3
Ninguna paleta asada halla mi boca	4
cuando ciño a un niño sobre mi corazón —	5
por muy astuto que sea, el gato no puede pillar a la vez	6
el ratón de fuera y el de dentro.	7

Original Hungarian

Sóvany ⁴⁷ vagyok, csak kenyeret ⁴⁸	I
eszem ⁴⁹ néha, ⁵⁰ e ⁵¹ léha, ⁵² locska ⁵³	2
lelkek ⁵⁴ közt ⁵⁵ ingyen ⁵⁶ keresek ⁵⁷	3
bizonyosabbat, ⁵⁸ mint ⁵⁹ a kocska. ⁶⁰	4
Nem dörgölődzik ⁶¹ sült ⁶² lopcska ⁶³	5
számhoz ⁶⁴ s szivemhez ⁶⁵ kisgyerek ⁶⁶ —	6
ügyeskedhet, ⁶⁷ nem fog ⁶⁸ a macska ⁶⁹	7
egyszerre ⁷⁰ kint ⁷¹ s bent ⁷² egeret. ⁷³	8

Chiastic structure:

1-4: e-ret(8)/o-cska(9)/e-ek(8)/o-cska(9)

5-8: o-cska(8)/e-ek(8)/a-cska(8)/e-ret(8) — same length

⁴⁷ ‘slim/thin’, fig. ‘poor’

⁴⁸ *kenyér* ‘bread’ + acc. -(e)t → *kenyeret*

⁴⁹ vb. *esz* ‘to eat’, rare without verbal pref., inf. *enni* + 1st pers. sg. ind. pres. def. -*em* → *eszem*

⁵⁰ adv. ‘sometimes’

⁵¹ poetic abbrv. *eme/ez* ‘this’

⁵² ‘improvident/idler’

⁵³ adj. ‘blethering’

⁵⁴ *lélek* ‘soul’ + pl. -(e)*k* → *lelkek*

⁵⁵ post. ‘between/amid’ from *között*: *köz* ‘interval’ + locat. -(ö)tt

⁵⁶ fig. arch. ‘in vain’; usually ‘free of charge’

⁵⁷ vb. *keres* ‘to seek’ + 1st pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

⁵⁸ adj. *bizonyos* ‘certain’ + comp. -*abb* ‘more’ + acc. -*t*

⁵⁹ ‘like’

⁶⁰ ‘a die’

⁶¹ vb. ‘to press against’, 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

⁶² vb. *sül* ‘to roast’ + past part. -*t*

⁶³ ‘chuck’ (shoulder meat cut, probably pork)

⁶⁴ *száj* ‘mouth’ + 1st pers. sg. single poss. -*m* → *szám* + allat. -*boz* ‘towards’ → *számboz*

⁶⁵ *szivem* ‘heart’ + allat. -*bez* ‘towards’

⁶⁶ *kis* ‘small’ + *gyerek* ‘child’

⁶⁷ vb. *ügyesked* ‘to be clever’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. potential -*het*

⁶⁸ vb. ‘to hold’, 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

⁶⁹ ‘cat’

⁷⁰ adv. *egyszer* ‘at once’ + abl. -*re* ‘onto’

⁷¹ adv. ‘outside’

⁷² adv. ‘inside’

⁷³ *egér* ‘mouse’ + acc. -(e)t → *egeret*

IV

Just like a pile of logs,	1
the world lies in a jumble;	2
each thing presses, weighs on,	3
holds fast to the next,	4
and so everything is determined.	5
Only what is not has a shrub,	6
only that will be that flower;	7
what is falls to pieces.	8

Cursory remark

‘To be or not to be’ is usually construed as the dichotomy between life and death. It tells us that not-to-be is potential beauty, whereas to-be is actual death.

French

Tout comme un tas de bûches,	1
le monde gît en vrac;	2
chaque chose presse, pèse,	3
s’arrime à l’autre,	4
et ainsi tout est déterminé.	5
Seul ce qui n'est pas a un arbrisseau,	6
seul cela sera cette fleur;	7
ce qui est tombera en pièces.	8

Spanish

Así como un montón de leña,	1
el mundo yace a granel;	2
cada cosa aprieta, pesa,	3
se arrima a la próxima,	4
y así todo está determinado.	5
Sólo lo que no es tiene una mata,	6
sólo eso será esta flor;	7
lo que es caera a pedazos.	8

Original Hungarian

Akár ⁷⁴ egy halom ⁷⁵ hasított ⁷⁶ fa, ⁷⁷	1
hever ⁷⁸ egymáson ⁷⁹ a világ, ⁸⁰	2
szorítja, ⁸¹ nyomja, ⁸² összefogja ⁸³	3
egyik ⁸⁴ dolog ⁸⁵ a másikát ⁸⁶	4
s így ⁸⁷ mindenik ⁸⁸ determinált. ⁸⁹	5
Csak ⁹⁰ ami ⁹¹ nincs, annak ⁹² van bokra, ⁹³	6
csak ⁹⁴ ami lesz, ⁹⁵ az a virág,	7
ami van, széthull ⁹⁶ darabokra. ⁹⁷	8

Chiastic structure:

1-4: o-a(9)/i-á(8)/o-a(9)/i-á(8)

5-8: i-á(8)/o-a(9)/i-á(8)/o-a(9)

⁷⁴ conj. lit. ‘just like’

⁷⁵ ‘pile/heap’

⁷⁶ vb. *hasít* ‘to cleave/split’ + past. part. *-ott*

⁷⁷ ‘tree’

⁷⁸ vb. ‘to lie’, 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

⁷⁹ pron. *egymás* ‘each other/one another’ + super. *-(o)n* ‘on’

⁸⁰ ‘world’

⁸¹ vb. *szorít* ‘to press/constrict’, inf. *szorítani* + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. def. *-ja*

⁸² vb. *nyom* ‘to weigh’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. def. *-ja*

⁸³ *össze* ‘together’ + vb. *fog* ‘to hold’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. def. *-ja*

⁸⁴ *egy* ‘one’ + 3rd pers. pl. mult. poss. *-ik* ‘of’

⁸⁵ ‘thing’

⁸⁶ adj. *más* ‘other’ + noun-forming *-ik* → ‘another’ + 3rd pers. sg. single poss. *-a* + acc. *-t* → *-át*

⁸⁷ ‘just so’

⁸⁸ adv. *minden* ‘everyone/everything’

⁸⁹ Latin *determinare* + vb.-forming *-ál* ‘to determine’ + past part. *-t*

⁹⁰ adv. ‘only’

⁹¹ rel. pron. ‘which/that’

⁹² art. *az* ‘that’ + attr. poss. *-nak* → *annak*

⁹³ *bokor* ‘shrub/bush’ + 3rd pers. sg. single poss. *-a*

⁹⁴ adv. ‘only’

⁹⁵ vb. ‘to be[come]’, 3rd pers. sg. ind. fut. indef.

⁹⁶ vb. ‘to fall apart’, 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

⁹⁷ adv. *darab* ‘piece/chunk’ + pl. *-ok* + subl. *-ra* ‘into’

V

At the freight train station,	1
I lay down behind the tree's butt,	2
like a chunk of silence;	3
a grey weed reached my mouth,	4
raw, strange-sweet.	5
Playing dead, I watched the guard, sensing what,	6
and his shadow on the quiet wagons	7
stubbornly leaping at the bright, dewy coal.	8

Cursory remark

This is likely a memory from J's childhood, when his family was so poor that he would occasionally steal lumps of coal from the wagons at the freight train station nearby his home.

French

À la gare de fret,	1
je m'étalai derrière le pied de l'arbre,	2
comme une masse de silence;	3
une herbe grise atteignit ma bouche,	4
crue, étrange-sucrée.	5
Faisant le mort, je regardais le garde, ressentant quoi,	6
et son ombre qui, sur les wagons silencieux,	7
s'entêtait à bondir sur les charbons reluisants, couverts de rosée.	8

Spanish

A la estación de tren de carga,	1
me tumbé detrás del pie del árbol,	2
como una masa de silencio;	3
una hierba gris alcanzó mi boca,	4
cruda, extraña-dulce.	5
Haciendome el muerto, miraba al guardia, que sentía qué,	6
y, sobre los quietos vagones, a su sombra	7
que se empeñaba en saltar sobre los relucientes, rociados carbones.	8

Original Hungarian

A teherpályaudvaron ⁹⁸	I
úgy ⁹⁹ lapultam ¹⁰⁰ a fa ¹⁰¹ tövéhez, ¹⁰²	2
mint ¹⁰³ egy darab ¹⁰⁴ csönd ¹⁰⁵ ; szürke ¹⁰⁶ gyom ¹⁰⁷	3
ért ¹⁰⁸ számhoz, ¹⁰⁹ nyers, ¹¹⁰ különös ¹¹¹ -édes. ¹¹²	4
Holtan ¹¹³ lestem ¹¹⁴ az őrt, ¹¹⁵ mit ¹¹⁶ érez, ¹¹⁷	5
s a hallgatag ¹¹⁸ vagónokon ¹¹⁹	6
árnyát, ¹²⁰ mely ¹²¹ ráugrott ¹²² a fényes, ¹²³	7
harmatos ¹²⁴ szénre ¹²⁵ konokon. ¹²⁶	8

Chiastic structure:

1-4: a-o(8)/é-e(9)/e-o(8)/é-e(9)

5-8: é-e(9)/o-o(8)/é-e(9)/o-o(8)

⁹⁸ *teher* ‘freight’ + *pálya* ‘track’ + *udvar* ‘courtyard’ + super. -(o)n ‘on’

⁹⁹ adv. ‘so (in this/that manner)’; *úgy* ... *mint* ... ‘like’

¹⁰⁰ vb. *lapul* ‘to lie low’ + 1st pers. sg. past indef. -tam

¹⁰¹ ‘tree’

¹⁰² *tő* ‘base of the stem of a plant’ + 3rd pers. sg. single poss. -e ‘of’ → *tőve* + allat. -hez ‘towards’ → *tövéhez*

¹⁰³ ‘like’

¹⁰⁴ ‘piece’

¹⁰⁵ ‘silence’, alt. *csend*

¹⁰⁶ adj. ‘grey’

¹⁰⁷ ‘weed’

¹⁰⁸ vb. *ért* ‘to reach’, arch. ‘to touch’, fig. ‘to understand’, 3rd pers. sg. past indef.

¹⁰⁹ *száj* ‘mouth’ + 1st pers. sg. single poss. -m → *szám* + allat. ‘towards’ -hoz → *számhoz*

¹¹⁰ adj. ‘raw’

¹¹¹ ‘strange’

¹¹² ‘sweet’

¹¹³ *holt* ‘dead’ + adv.-forming -an

¹¹⁴ vb. *les* ‘to spy’ + 1st pers. sg. past indef. -tem

¹¹⁵ *őr* ‘guard’ + acc. -t

¹¹⁶ inter. ‘what’

¹¹⁷ vb. ‘to feel/smell/taste’, 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

¹¹⁸ vb. *hallgat* ‘to remain silent/to listen’ + adj.-forming -ag

¹¹⁹ *vagón* ‘wagon’ + pl. -ok + super. -(o)n ‘on’

¹²⁰ *árny* ‘shadow/ghost’ + 3rd pers. sg. single poss. -a + acc. -t → -át

¹²¹ literary, ‘which/that’

¹²² pointed action *ra-* ‘at’ + vb. *ugrik* ‘to leap/jump’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. past. indef. -(o)tt → *ugrott*

¹²³ *fény* ‘light/glitter’ + adj.-forming -es → ‘bright’

¹²⁴ adj. ‘dewy’

¹²⁵ *szén* ‘coal’ + subl. -re ‘onto’

¹²⁶ adj. *konok* ‘stubborn’ + super. -(o)n ‘on (that manner)’

VI

Behold the anguish inside,	1
yet the explanation lies outside.	2
Your wound is the world — on fire, burning up —	3
and you feel your soul, the fever.	4
You are captive as long as your heart rebels —	5
so you will be free if it indulges	6
not building for yourself a house	7
where a landlord settles in.	8

Cursory remark

We are not captives of the world, but of our own heart, which invited the world (the landlord) in for us to contend with. The inner struggle is felt as anguish and yields a feverish soul.

French

Voici le tourment intérieur,	1
pourtant l'explication se trouve à l'extérieur.	2
Ta blessure est le monde — en feu, s'échauffant —	3
et tu sens ton âme, la fièvre.	4
Tu es captif tant que ton cœur se révolte —	5
ainsi tu seras libre s'il se complait	6
à ne pas bâtir pour toi une maison	7
où un propriétaire vient demeurer.	8

Spanish

He aquí el tormento interior,	1
aunque la explicación yace fuera.	2
Tu herida es el mundo — en llamas, caldeando —	3
y sientes tú alma, la fiebre.	4
Quedas cautivo mientras tu corazón se rebela —	5
así serás libre si él se complace	6
en no edificarte una casa	7
donde un dueño se aposenta.	8

Original Hungarian

Im ¹²⁷ itt a szenvedés ¹²⁸ belül, ¹²⁹	I
ám ¹³⁰ ott kívül ¹³¹ a magyarázat. ¹³²	2
Sebed ¹³³ a világ — ég, ¹³⁴ hevül ¹³⁵	3
s te ¹³⁶ lelkedet ¹³⁷ érzed, ¹³⁸ a lázat. ¹³⁹	4
Rab ¹⁴⁰ vagy, amíg ¹⁴¹ a szíved ¹⁴² lázad ¹⁴³ —	5
úgy ¹⁴⁴ szabadulsz, ¹⁴⁵ ha ¹⁴⁶ kényedül ¹⁴⁷	6
nem raksz ¹⁴⁸ magadnak ¹⁴⁹ olyan ¹⁵⁰ házat, ¹⁵¹	7
melybe ¹⁵² háziúr ¹⁵³ települ. ¹⁵⁴	8

Chiastic structure:

1-4: e-ül(8)/á-at(9)/e-ül(8)/á-at(9)

5-8: á-ad(9)/e-ül(8)/á-at(9)/e-ül(8)

¹²⁷ literary, abbrv. íme ‘here is/behold’

¹²⁸ vb. *szenved* ‘to suffer’ + noun-forming -és

¹²⁹ ‘inside’

¹³⁰ poetic, interj. contrad. ‘but’

¹³¹ adv. ‘outdoor/outside’

¹³² vb. *magyaráz* ‘to explain’ + noun-forming -at

¹³³ *seb* ‘wound’ + 2nd pers. sg. single poss. -ed

¹³⁴ vb. ‘to be on fire’, 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

¹³⁵ vb. ‘to grow hot’, 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

¹³⁶ inform. sg. ‘you’

¹³⁷ *lélek* ‘soul’ + 2nd pers. sg. single poss. -ed → *lelked* + acc. -(e)t

¹³⁸ vb. *érez* ‘to feel’, 2nd pers. sg. ind. pres. def.

¹³⁹ *láz* ‘fever’ + acc. -(a)t

¹⁴⁰ ‘captive’

¹⁴¹ adv. ‘as long as’; ‘until’ if followed by negated verb

¹⁴² *szíved* ‘heart’ + 2nd pers. sg. single poss. -ed

¹⁴³ vb. *to rebel*, 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

¹⁴⁴ *úgy... ha ...* ‘then ... if ...’

¹⁴⁵ *szabad* ‘free’ + vb.-forming -ul + 2nd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef. -sz

¹⁴⁶ ‘if?’

¹⁴⁷ literary, vb. ‘to indulge’, 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

¹⁴⁸ vb. *rak* ‘to set up/to build’, 2nd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef. -sz

¹⁴⁹ *maga* ‘oneself’ + 2nd pers. sg. single poss. -d + dat. -nak

¹⁵⁰ pron. ‘such/that kind of thing’

¹⁵¹ *ház* ‘house’ + acc. -(a)t

¹⁵² literary, arch. *mely* which’ + illative -be ‘into (the inside of)’

¹⁵³ *ház* ‘house’ + adj.-forming ‘of the’ -i + *úr* ‘master’

¹⁵⁴ vb. ‘to settle (somewhere)’, 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

VII

I
2
3
4
5
6
7
8

I looked up from beneath the evening
 to the cogwheels of the heavens —
 from the glittering threads of chance
 the loom of the past wove the law;
 and I looked up again onto the sky
 from beneath the steam of my dreams,
 and I saw the fabric of the law
 always tearing up somewhere.

Cursory remark

Whereas verses 1-2 echo the ancient mechanical understanding of the firmament as concentric spheres, and verses 2-4 hearken back at the mythological Fates (Parcæ), verses 5-8 evoke the image of an aerostat, whose aeronaut is J, where J's dreams are the steam that tries to lift him up, and the law is the envelope, whose tears are J's constant misfortune. (The metaphor is a little off, as balloons use hot air, not steam.)

French

I
2
3
4
5
6
7
8

Par dessous le soir,
 j'ai levé les yeux aux rouages des cieux —
 des fils scintillants de la chance
 le métier du passé avait tissé la loi;
 par dessous la vapeur de mes rêves,
 j'ai regardé à nouveau dans les cieux
 et j'ai vu le tissu de la loi
 toujours se déchirer quelque part.

Spanish

I
2
3
4
5
6
7
8

Por debajo del atardecer,
 levanté los ojos a las ruedas dentadas de los cielos —
 de los hilos brillantes de la suerte
 el telar del pasado había tejido la ley;
 por debajo del vapor de mis sueños,
 miré de nuevo en los cielos
 y vi el tejido de la ley
 siempre destramarse en alguna parte.

Original Hungarian

Én fölnéztem ¹⁵⁵ az est ¹⁵⁶ alól ¹⁵⁷	I
az eget ¹⁵⁸ fogaskerekére ¹⁵⁹ —	2
csillo ¹⁶⁰ véletlen ¹⁶¹ szálaiból ¹⁶²	3
törvényt ¹⁶³ szőtt ¹⁶⁴ a mult ¹⁶⁵ szövőszéke ¹⁶⁶	4
és megint ¹⁶⁷ fölnéztem az égre ¹⁶⁸	5
álmaim ¹⁶⁹ gózei ¹⁷⁰ alól	6
s láttam, ¹⁷¹ a törvény szövedéke ¹⁷²	7
mindig ¹⁷³ fölfeslik ¹⁷⁴ valahol. ¹⁷⁵	8

Chiastic structure:

1-4: a-ól(8)/é-e(9)/a-ól(9)/é-e(9)

5-8: é-e(9)/a-ól(8)/é-e(9)/a-ol(8)

¹⁵⁵ vb. pref. *föl-* ‘upwards’ + vb. *néz* ‘to look’ + 1st pers. sg. past. def. *-tem*

¹⁵⁶ arch. ‘(in the) evening’

¹⁵⁷ *al* ‘lower part’ + abl. *-l* ‘from’

¹⁵⁸ *ég* ‘sky’ + acc. *-(e)t*

¹⁵⁹ *fogas* ‘tooth’ + *kerék* ‘wheel’: ‘cogwheel’ + 3rd pers. sg. single poss. *-e* + subl. *-re* ‘towards’

¹⁶⁰ vb. *csillög* ‘to glitter’ + adj.-forming *-o* → *csilló*; usually *csillogó*

¹⁶¹ ‘chance’

¹⁶² *szál* ‘thread’ + 3rd pers. sg. poss. *-a* + poss. pl. *-i* + elative *-ból* ‘from/out of’

¹⁶³ *törveny* ‘law/principle’ + acc. *-t*

¹⁶⁴ vb. *sző* ‘to weave’, past part.

¹⁶⁵ **múlt?** rare, past part. ‘past’, inf. *múlik*

¹⁶⁶ *szövő* ‘weaver’ + *szék* ‘chair’: ‘loom’ + 3rd pers. sg. single poss. *-e*

¹⁶⁷ *meg* ‘again’ (short action) + adv.-forming *-int*

¹⁶⁸ *ég* ‘sky’ + subl. sg. *-re* ‘onto’

¹⁶⁹ *ádom* ‘dream’ + 1st pers. sg. poss. *-a* + poss. pl. *-i* + 1st pers. sg. pers. *-m*

¹⁷⁰ *góz* ‘steam, vapour’ + 3rd pers. sg. poss. *-e* + pl. poss. *-i*

¹⁷¹ vb. *lát* ‘to see’ + short base *-t*, 1st pers. sg. past def. *-tam*

¹⁷² *szövedék* ‘fabric/cloth/web’ + 3rd pers. sg. single poss. *-e*

¹⁷³ *mind* ‘always’ (repetition) + term. ‘until’ *-ig*

¹⁷⁴ vb. pref. *föl-* ‘upwards’ + arch., poetic, vb. *feszlik* ‘to come unstitched’, 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

¹⁷⁵ ‘somewhere’

VIII

The silence listened intently — One struck.	1
You could visit your childhood;	2
between the damp cement walls	3
you could imagine a bit of freedom —	4
I thought. And as soon as I stood up,	5
the stars, the Great Bear	6
were glittering above,	7
like the grilles up in the silent cell.	8

Cursory remark

This is likely a memory of J's imprisonment in 1931.

French

Le silence écoutait attentivement — Une heure sonna.	1
Tu pourrais visiter ton enfance;	2
entre les murs de ciment humide	3
tu pourrais imaginer un peu de liberté —	4
me dis-je. Et dès que je fus sur pied,	5
les étoiles, la Grande Ourse	6
scintillaient au-dessus,	7
comme les grilles en haut dans ma cellule.	8

Spanish

El silencio escuchaba atentamente — La una sonó.	1
Podrías visitar tu infancia;	2
entre las paredes de cemento húmedo	3
podrías imaginar un poco de libertad —	4
pensé. Y al ponerme en pie,	5
las estrellas, la Osa Mayor	6
destellaban por encima,	7
como las rejas arriba en mi celda.	8

Original Hungarian

Fülelt ¹⁷⁶ a csend ¹⁷⁷ — egyet ¹⁷⁸ ütött ¹⁷⁹	1
Fölkereshetnéd ¹⁸⁰ ifjúságod; ¹⁸¹	2
nyirkos ¹⁸² cementfalak ¹⁸³ között ¹⁸⁴	3
képzelihetsz ¹⁸⁵ egy kis sabadságot ¹⁸⁶ —	4
gondoltam. ¹⁸⁷ S hát ¹⁸⁸ amint ¹⁸⁹ fölállók ¹⁹⁰	5
a csillagok, ¹⁹¹ a Göncölök ¹⁹²	6
úgy ¹⁹³ fénylenek ¹⁹⁴ fönt, ¹⁹⁵ mint a rácsok ¹⁹⁶	7
a hallgatag ¹⁹⁷ cella ¹⁹⁸ fölött. ¹⁹⁹	8

Chiastic structure:

1-4: ü-ött(8)/á-o(9)/ö-ö(8)/á-o(9)

5-8: á-o(9)/ö-ö(8)/á-o(9)/ö-ött(8)

¹⁷⁶ *fül* ‘ear’ + vb.-forming *-el*: ‘to listen (intently)’ + 3rd pers. ind. past indef. *-t*

¹⁷⁷ ‘silence’. alt. *csönd*

¹⁷⁸ *egy* + acc. *-t*

¹⁷⁹ vb. *üt* ‘to strike’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. past indef. *-(ö)tt*

¹⁸⁰ *föl* ‘upwards’ + *keres* ‘to seek’: ‘to visit’ + pot. ‘may/might’ *-het* + 2nd pers. sg. ind. pres. cond. *-ned*, alt. *felkeres*

¹⁸¹ adj. *ifjú* ‘young’ + noun-forming *-ság* (state of being): ‘youth’ + 2nd pers. informal sg. poss. single poss. *-od*: ‘your childhood’ (informal)

¹⁸² adj. ‘humid/damp’

¹⁸³ *cement* ‘cement’+ *fal* ‘wall’ + pl. *-ak*

¹⁸⁴ post. ‘between/amid’, *köz* ‘interval’ + locat. *-(ö)tt*

¹⁸⁵ *kép* ‘image’ + vb.-forming *-(z)el*: ‘to imagine’ + pot. *-het* + 2nd pers. sg. ind. pres. *-sz*

¹⁸⁶ *szabad* ‘free’ + *-ság* (state of being): ‘freedom’ + acc. *-(a)t*

¹⁸⁷ vb. *gondol* ‘to think/plan/guess/worry’ + 1st pers. sg. ind. past *-tam*

¹⁸⁸ ‘back body’, ‘well...’, ‘then/and/but’ (questioning back), ‘surely’

¹⁸⁹ *az* + mint ‘like’: ‘as soon as’, literary ‘as’

¹⁹⁰ *föl* ‘upwards’ + vb. *áll* ‘to stand’ + 1st pers. sg. ind. pres. indef. *-ok*, alt. *felállók*

¹⁹¹ *csillag* ‘star’ + pl. *-ak*

¹⁹² *Göncöl* + pl. *-ök*: ‘the Great Bear’ (constellation)

¹⁹³ adv. ‘so (in this/that manner)’; *úgy* ... *mint* ... ‘like’

¹⁹⁴ *fény* ‘light’ + freq. vb.-forming *-lik*: ‘to glitter’ + 3rd pers. pl. ind. pres. indef. *-ek*

¹⁹⁵ adv. ‘above/up/awake/upstairs’, alt. *fent*

¹⁹⁶ *racs* ‘grid/grille’ + pl. *-ok*

¹⁹⁷ vb. *hallgat* ‘to remain silent/to listen’ + adj.-forming *-ag*

¹⁹⁸ ‘cell’

¹⁹⁹ *föl* ‘up/upwards’ + locat. *-(ö)tt*: ‘above’, alt. *elett*

IX

I heard iron weeping,	1
I heard rain laughing.	2
I saw that the past was cracked	3
and that only memories may be forgotten,	4
and how I cannot but love,	5
bending under my burdens —	6
why should I also forge a weapon	7
out of you, golden self-awareness!	8

Cursory remark

Verses 1-2 refer to the sounds of iron being forged and quenched in water. The blacksmith is fixing a crack, which reminds J of a painful past event, possibly a break-up. Verses 3-6 form a chiasm: verse 5 echoes verse 4: to avoid his love fading away, he will keep loving; verse 6 answers verse 3: instead of hammering the crack to make it disappear, J bends under it. Then there is no need to forge a sword blade to become strong. J's self-consciousness is golden like the glow of the kiln's interior.

French

J'ai entendu le fer sangloter,	1
j'ai entendu la pluie rire.	2
Je vis que le passé était craquelé	3
et que seuls les souvenirs peuvent s'oublier,	4
et comment je ne peux qu'aimer,	5
pliant sous mes fardeaux —	6
pourquoi devrais-je aussi forger une arme	7
de toi, for intérieur doré!	8

Spanish

Oí el hierro sollozar,	1
oí la lluvia reírse.	2
Vi que el pasado estaba agrietado	3
y que solos los recuerdos pueden olvidarse,	4
y cómo sólo puedo amar,	5
doblándome debajo de mis cargas —	6
¿por qué debería también fraguar un arma	7
de ti, fuero interior dorado!	8

Original Hungarian

Hallottam ²⁰⁰ sírni ²⁰¹ a vasat, ²⁰²	I
hallottam az esőt ²⁰³ nevetni. ²⁰⁴	2
Láttam, ²⁰⁵ hogy ²⁰⁶ a mult ²⁰⁷ meghasadt ²⁰⁸	3
s csak ²⁰⁹ képzetet ²¹⁰ lehet ²¹¹ feledni; ²¹²	4
s hogy ²¹³ nem tudok ²¹⁴ mást, ²¹⁵ mint ²¹⁶ szeretni, ²¹⁷	5
görnyedve ²¹⁸ terheim ²¹⁹ alatt ²²⁰ —	6
minek ²²¹ is ²²² kell ²²³ fegyvert ²²⁴ veretni ²²⁵	7
belőled, ²²⁶ arany ²²⁷ öntudat! ²²⁸	8

Chiastic structure:

1-4: a-at(8)/et-ni(9)/a-a[dt](8)/e[d]-ni(9)

5-8: e[t]-ni(9)/a-a[tt](8)/et-ni(9)/u-at(8)

²⁰⁰ vb. *hall* ‘to hear’ + 1st pers. sg. ind. past def. *-ottam*

²⁰¹ vb. *sír* ‘to cry/weep’ + inf. *-ni*

²⁰² *vas* ‘iron’ + acc. *-(a)t*

²⁰³ vb. *es*, inf. *esik* + pres. part. *-ő* + acc. *-t*

²⁰⁴ vb. *nevet* ‘to laugh’, inf. *nevetni*

²⁰⁵ vb. *lát* ‘to see’ + short base *-t*, 1st pers. sg. past def. *-tam*

²⁰⁶ adv. ‘how’

²⁰⁷ **múlt?** rare, past part. ‘past’, inf. *múlik*

²⁰⁸ perfect. vb. pref. *meg-* + vb. *hasad* ‘to crack/split apart’ + past part. *-t*

²⁰⁹ adv. ‘only’

²¹⁰ *képzet* ‘idea/image/notion’ + acc. *-t*

²¹¹ pot. vb. *van/lesz*: ‘may be/may become’, 3rd pers. sg. ind.

²¹² lit. vb. *feled* ‘to forget’, alt. *felejt*

²¹³ adv. ‘how’

²¹⁴ vb. *tud* ‘to know’/aux. ‘can + inf.’ + 1st pers. sg. ind. pres. indef. *-ok*

²¹⁵ adj. *más* ‘other/different’ + acc. *-t*

²¹⁶ comp. different degrees ‘than’

²¹⁷ inf. vb. *szeret* ‘to love’

²¹⁸ vb. *görnyed* ‘to bend (under a burden)’ + adv.-forming *-ve*

²¹⁹ *teber* ‘freight/burden’ + 1st pers. sg. poss. mult. poss. *-eim* → *terheim*

²²⁰ post. *al-* ‘lower part’+ locat. *-(a)tt*

²²¹ *mi* + dat. *-nek*: ‘for what’

²²² doublet of *és* ‘and’, adv. ‘also’

²²³ aux. vb. ‘must/need to/have to + inf.’

²²⁴ *fegyever* ‘weapon’ + acc. *-t*

²²⁵ inf. vb. ‘to hammer’, alt. *veretés*

²²⁶ pron. *belőle* ‘out of him/her/it’ + 2nd pers. sg. *-d*

²²⁷ ‘gold/golden’

²²⁸ ‘self-awareness’

X

He is a grown man he who has	1
neither mother nor father in his heart,	2
he who knows that he receives life	3
as a supplement to death, and will return it	4
anytime, like a found object	5
— therefore he treasures it,	6
he who is neither a god nor a priest,	7
neither to himself nor to others.	8

Cursory remark

An integral man (the Hungarian language is actually gender neutral) knows that his parents cannot protect him anymore from the truth of mortality. This truth is not treasured by gods, as they are immortal, nor Christian priests, who preach eternal life.

French

Il est un homme accompli celui qui n'a	1
ni mère ni père en son cœur,	2
celui qui sait qu'il reçoit la vie	3
tel un supplément à la mort, et la rendra	4
à tout moment, comme un objet trouvé	5
— par conséquent il la garde,	6
celui qui n'est ni un dieu ni un prêtre,	7
ni pour lui-même ni pour autrui.	8

Spanish

Es un hombre mayor el que no tiene	1
madre o padre en su corazón,	2
el que sabe que acoge la vida	3
como un suplemento a la muerte, y la devolverá	4
en cualquier momento, como un objeto encontrado	5
— por lo cual la guardará	6
el que no es ni un diós ni un sacerdote,	7
ni para él mismo ni para los demás.	8

Original Hungarian

Az meglett ²²⁹ ember ²³⁰ , akinek ²³¹	I
szívében ²³² nincs se anyja, ²³³ apja, ²³⁴	2
ki ²³⁵ tudja, ²³⁶ hogy ²³⁷ az életet ²³⁸	3
halálra ²³⁹ ráadásul ²⁴⁰ kapja ²⁴¹	4
s mint ²⁴² talált ²⁴³ tárgyat ²⁴⁴ visszaadja ²⁴⁵	5
bármikor ²⁴⁶ — ezért ²⁴⁷ őrzí ²⁴⁸ meg, ²⁴⁹	6
ki ²⁵⁰ nem istene ²⁵¹ és nem papja ²⁵²	7
se ²⁵³ magának, ²⁵⁴ sem senkinek. ²⁵⁵	8

Chiastic structure:

1-4: ki-nek(8)/ap-ja(9)/e-e(8)/a[p]-ja(9)

5-8: a[d]-ja(9)/i-e(8)/ap-ja(9)/ki-nek(8)

²²⁹ obs. ‘adult’

²³⁰ ‘person’

²³¹ pron. *aki* ‘who’ + attr. poss. *-nek*

²³² *szív* ‘heart’ + poss. ‘his’ *-e* + innes. ‘in’ *-ben*

²³³ *anya* ‘mother’ + 3rd pers. sg. single poss. *-(j)a*

²³⁴ *apa* ‘father’ + 3rd pers. sg. single poss. *-(j)a*

²³⁵ pron. rel. arch. ‘he who’, alt. *aki*

²³⁶ vb. *tud* ‘to know’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. def. *-ja*

²³⁷ conj. ‘so that’

²³⁸ *élet* ‘life’ + acc. *-(e)t*

²³⁹ vb. *hal* ‘to die’ + arch. noun-forming *-ál* → ‘death’ + subl. ‘on/for’ *-ra* → ‘to death’

²⁴⁰ *ráadás* ‘addition/extra’ + essive ‘as/with the intention of’ *-ul*

²⁴¹ vb. *kap* ‘to receive’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. def. *-ja*

²⁴² ‘like’

²⁴³ vb. *talált* ‘to find’ + past part.

²⁴⁴ *tárgy* ‘object/thing/subject’ + acc. *-(a)t*

²⁴⁵ vb. *visszaad* ‘to give back’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. def. *-ja*

²⁴⁶ *bár* ‘any’ + adv. *mikor* ‘when’ → ‘any time’

²⁴⁷ conj. ‘therefore’

²⁴⁸ vb. *őriz* ‘to guard’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. def. *-i*

²⁴⁹ arch. emph.

²⁵⁰ ‘he who’

²⁵¹ *isten* ‘god’ + 3rd pers. sg. sing. poss. *-e*

²⁵² *pap* ‘priest’ + 3rd pers. sg. sing. poss. *-(j)a*

²⁵³ alt. *sem, sem ..., sem ...* ‘neither ... nor ...’

²⁵⁴ pron. refl. 3rd pers. ‘himself’

²⁵⁵ pron. *senki* ‘no one/nobody’

XI

I saw happiness; it was soft, bright	1
and one and half a quintal.	2
On the coarse grass of the farmyard	3
its curly smile swayed.	4
It plopped into the squishy, tepid puddle,	5
squinted, further grunted at me once —	6
To this day I see how hesitantly	7
the sunlight toyed with its bristles.	8

Cursory remark

While this seems a rather descriptive poem, the first and last two verses are subjective. Also the last verse echoes the first, in the fashion of a chiasm: verse 1 is about seeing happiness, and the last features light and playfulness: the Hungarian uses *fény* for ‘light’, but it could figuratively also mean ‘joy’, hence my translation: ‘the sunlight toyed’.

French

J'ai vu le bonheur; il était doux, brillant	1
et un quintal et demi.	2
Sur la mauvaise herbe de la cour de ferme	3
son sourire courbé se balançait.	4
Il s'affala dans la marre tendre et tiède,	5
plissa les yeux, puis me grogna une fois —	6
Jusqu'à ce jour, je vois avec quelle hésitation	7
la lumière du jour s'amusait avec ses soies.	8

Spanish

Vi la felicidad; era suave, brillante	1
y un quintal y medio.	2
En la maleza del patio de la granja	3
su sonrisa curva se balanceaba.	4
Se abatió en el charco blando y tibio,	5
entre cerró los ojos, pues me gruñó una vez —	6
hasta hoy veo con que vacilación	7
la luz del día jugueteaba con sus cerdas.	8

Original Hungarian

Láttam ²⁵⁶ a boldogságot ²⁵⁷ én, ²⁵⁸	I
lágy ²⁵⁹ volt, ²⁶⁰ szőke ²⁶¹ és másfél ²⁶² mázsa. ²⁶³	2
Az udvar ²⁶⁴ szigorú ²⁶⁵ gyöpén ²⁶⁶	3
imbolygott ²⁶⁷ göndör ²⁶⁸ mosolygása. ²⁶⁹	4
Ledőlt ²⁷⁰ a puha, ²⁷¹ langy ²⁷² tócsába, ²⁷³	5
hunyorgott, ²⁷⁴ röfftent ²⁷⁵ még ²⁷⁶ felém ²⁷⁷ —	6
ma ²⁷⁸ is ²⁷⁹ látom, ²⁸⁰ mily ²⁸¹ tétevázva ²⁸²	7
babrált ²⁸³ pihéi ²⁸⁴ közt ²⁸⁵ a fény. ²⁸⁶	8

Chiastic structure:

1-4: o-é(8)/á-a(9)/ö-é(8)/á-a(9)

5-8: á-a(9)/e-é(8)/á-a(9)/a-é(8)

²⁵⁶ vb. *lát* ‘to see’ + short base *-t*, 1st pers. sg. past def. *-tam*

²⁵⁷ adj. *boldog* ‘happy’ + noun-forming *-ság* (state of being) + acc. *-(o)t*

²⁵⁸ pron. ‘I’

²⁵⁹ adj. ‘soft’

²⁶⁰ vb. *van* ‘to be’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. past indef.

²⁶¹ adj. *sző* ‘blonde’ + dim. *-ke*

²⁶² *más* ‘other/different’ + *fél* ‘half’ → ‘one and a half’

²⁶³ ‘quintal’

²⁶⁴ ‘yard’

²⁶⁵ adj. ‘severe/strict’

²⁶⁶ *gyep* ‘lawn/grass’ + super. *-(e)n* ‘on’

²⁶⁷ vb. *imbolyog* ‘to sway’ + 3rd pers. sg. single poss. *-e*

²⁶⁸ adj. ‘curly’

²⁶⁹ *mosolygás* ‘smile’ + 3rd pers. sg. single poss. *-a*

²⁷⁰ vb. *ledoöl* ‘to fall down’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. past indef. *-t*

²⁷¹ ‘soft/squishy’

²⁷² arch. poetic *langyos* ‘tepid’

²⁷³ *tócsa* ‘puddle’ + illative *-ba* ‘into’

²⁷⁴ vb. *hunyorg* ‘to squint’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. past. indef. *-rgott*

²⁷⁵ *röffen* ‘to grunt once (of a pig)’

²⁷⁶ adv. ‘still/moreover’

²⁷⁷ post. *felé* ‘to/towards’ + 1st pers. sg. poss *-m* → pron. ‘towards me’

²⁷⁸ adv. ‘today’

²⁷⁹ doublet of *és* ‘and’, adv. ‘also’

²⁸⁰ vb. *lát* ‘to see’ + 1st pers. sg. ind. pres. def.

²⁸¹ poetic ‘how ...(!)’

²⁸² vb. *tétova* ‘to hesitate’ (inf. *tétovazik*) → adv. part. ‘doing smth hesitantly’

²⁸³ vb. *babrál* ‘to fiddle’

²⁸⁴ *pihé* ‘down, fluff’ + adj.-forming *-i*

²⁸⁵ post. ‘between/amid’ from *között*: *köz* ‘interval’ + locat. *-(ö)tt*

²⁸⁶ ‘light/glitter’, fig. ‘happiness/joy’

XII

I live by a railroad.	1
Many a train comes and goes,	2
and I watch from afar	3
how the bright windows fly by	4
in the wavering, fluffy darkness.	5
So the lit-up days rush into the eternal night,	6
and I stand in the light from the compartments,	7
I rest on my elbow and remain silent.	8

French

Je vis près du chemin de fer.	1
NOMBREUX SONT LES TRAINS	2
QUI VIENNENT ET VONT, ET J'OBERVE DE LOIN	3
COMMENT LES FENÊTRES ILLUMINÉES DÉFILENT	4
DANS L'OBSCURITÉ VACILLANTE ET PELUCHÉE.	5
AINSI LES JOURS LUISANTS SE PRESSENT DANS LA NUIT ÉTERNELLE,	6
ET JE ME TIENS DANS LA LUMIÈRE DES COMPARTIMENTS,	7
JE M'ACCOUDE ET GARDE LE SILENCE.	8

Spanish

Vivo cerca del ferrocarril.	1
Son muchos los trenes	2
que vienen y van, y miro desde lejos	3
cómo las brillantes ventanas vuelan de paso	4
en la oscuridad vacilante y vellosa.	5
Así los días lucientes se apuran en la noche eterna,	6
y me quedo en la luz de los compartimentos,	7
me acudo y guardo silencio.	8

Original Hungarian

Vasútnál ²⁸⁷	lakom. ²⁸⁸	Erre ²⁸⁹	sok ²⁹⁰	I
vonat ²⁹¹	jön ²⁹² -megy ²⁹³	és el ²⁹⁴ -elnézem, ²⁹⁵		2
hogy ²⁹⁶	szállnak ²⁹⁷	fényes ²⁹⁸	ablakok ²⁹⁹	3
a lengedező ³⁰⁰	szösz ³⁰¹ -sötétben. ³⁰²			4
Így ³⁰³	iramlanak ³⁰⁴	örök ³⁰⁵	éjben ³⁰⁶	5
kivilágított ³⁰⁷	nappalok ³⁰⁸			6
s én ³⁰⁹	állok ³¹⁰	minden ³¹¹	fülke ³¹² -fényben, ³¹³	7
én könyöklök ³¹⁴	és hallgatok. ³¹⁵			8

Chiastic structure:

1-4: o(8)/é-e(9)/a-o(8)/é-e(9)

5-8: é-e(9)/a-o(8)/é-e(9)/o(8)

²⁸⁷ *vas* ‘iron’ + *ut* ‘way/road’ + adess. *-nál* ‘at/by’

²⁸⁸ vb. *lak* ‘to dwell’, inf. *lakik*, 1st pers. sg. ind. pres. *-(o)m*

²⁸⁹ pron. *ez* ‘this/it’ + subl. sg. *-re* ‘onto/to’

²⁹⁰ ‘much/many’

²⁹¹ vb. *von* ‘to pull/draw’ + noun-forming *-at* → ‘train’

²⁹² vb. ‘to come’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

²⁹³ vb. ‘to go/travel/pass by (of time)’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

²⁹⁴ adv./conj. ‘afar/far away’

²⁹⁵ vb. pref. *el-* ‘continuity over a long time’ + vb. *nez* ‘to look at’

²⁹⁶ short. *bogyan?* ‘how’

²⁹⁷ vb. *száll* ‘to fly/land/come down’ + 3rd pers. pl. ind. pres. indef.

²⁹⁸ *fény* ‘light/glitter’ + adj.-forming *-es* → ‘bright’

²⁹⁹ *ablak* ‘window’ + pl. *-(o)k*

³⁰⁰ vb. *leng* ‘to swing/sway/wave’ + freq. vb.-forming *-edezik* (unrounded front-vowel) + pres. part. *-ő* → ‘swinging/waving’

³⁰¹ ‘harl/fluff’

³⁰² adj./subst. *sötét* ‘dark[ness]’ + iness. sg. *-ben* ‘in’

³⁰³ ‘just so’

³⁰⁴ *ir* ‘movement’ + rare instr. vb.-forming *-amlik* (inf.) → ‘to rush/hurry’ + 3rd pers. pl. ind. pres. indef. *-(a)nak*

³⁰⁵ ‘perpetual/eternal’

³⁰⁶ poetic *éj* ‘night’ + innes. ‘in’ *-ben*

³⁰⁷ vb. pref. *ki* ‘outwardly’ + *világ* ‘light (arch.)/world’ → arch. ‘illumination’ + caus. vb.-forming *-ít* ‘to make smth ...-like’ → ‘to illuminate’ + past part. *-ott*

³⁰⁸ *nap* ‘day’ + instr. *-val* ‘with’ → *nappal* + pl. *-(o)k*

³⁰⁹ pron. ‘I’

³¹⁰ vb. *áll* ‘to stand’ + 1st pers. sg. ind. pres. indef. *-ok*

³¹¹ det. ‘every’

³¹² *fül* ‘semi-circular obj./shape’ + dim. *-ke* → ‘compartment’

³¹³ *fény* ‘light/glitter’ + innes. *-ben* ‘in’

³¹⁴ *könyök* ‘elbow’ + vb.-forming *-öl* → ‘to rest on one’s elbow’ + 1st pers. sg. ind. pers. *-ök*

³¹⁵ vb. *hallgat* ‘to remain silent/to listen’ + 1st pers. sg. ind. pres. indef. *-ok*

Chapter 4

1936

You will grow old and come to regret how you hurt me — which you are proud of today.	1
The conscience will come knocking	2
and won't leave you alone in any memory.	3
	4
	5
You will have an old dog that will settle next to you.	6
You will rest during the day, dozing off on a chair	7
because you are afraid alone at night.	8
Shadows will fall on the trembling old lady.	9
	10
Your old dog will whine sometimes, but the room falls silent again, all is in order,	11
and yet someone from the past	12
is missing in the lonely silence.	13
	14
	15
You will toddle and when your bad leg has tottered enough, you will sit down. Your youthful picture stands	16
above in a golden frame. You will mutter to it:	17
'I didn't embrace him, obviously I didn't love him.'	18
	19
	20
'What could I have done?' — you ask, but your toothless mouth can no longer answer;	21
facing the sun outside, you close your eyes,	22
you can barely wait for the moon to rise.	23
	24
	25
Because when you fall asleep, the bed will leap	26

like a foal trying to throw off its harness.	27
And fear, not desire, will occupy your head:	28
should you love him, should you not love him?	29
	30
Decide for yourself. I regret	31
that I cannot answer if you ask: is he alive?	32
Because the sorrow inside is tired,	33
it falls asleep like a child, and I with it.	34

French

Tu vieilliras et regretteras combien tu m'as blessé	I
— ce dont tu t'enorgueillis aujourd'hui.	2
La conscience viendra heurter à la porte	3
et ne te laissera seule dans aucun souvenir.	4
	5
Tu auras un vieux chien qui s'installera à tes côtés.	6
Tu te reposeras durant le jour, t'assoupissant sur une chaise	7
parce que tu as peur seule la nuit.	8
Les ombres couvriront la vieille dame tremblante.	9
	10
Ton vieux chien gémira parfois,	II
mais la pièce redevient silencieuse, tout est en ordre,	12
et pourtant quelqu'un du passé	13
manque dans le silence solitaire.	14
	15
Tu chancelleras et quand ta mauvaise jambe aura assez titubé,	16
tu t'asseyeras. Ton portrait de jeunesse trône	17
dans un cadre doré. Tu lui marmonneras :	18
« Je ne l'ai pas serré dans mes bras, c'est que je ne l'aimais pas. »	19
	20
« Qu'aurais-je pu faire? » — tu te demandes,	21
mais ta bouche édentée ne peut plus répondre;	22
face au soleil dehors, tu fermes les yeux,	23
tu peux à peine attendre que la lune se lève.	24
	25
Car quand tu t'endors, le lit bondit	26
comme un poulin qui essaie de se défaire de son harnais.	27
Et la peur, non le désir, occupera ta tête :	28
devrais-tu l'aimer, devrais-tu ne pas l'aimer?	29
	30
Décide toi-même. Je suis au regret	31
de ne pouvoir répondre si tu demandes : est-il vivant?	32
Parce que la peine dedans est fatiguée,	33
elle s'endort comme un enfant, et moi avec.	34

Majd ¹ megöregszel ² és bánni ³ fogod, ⁴	I
hogy ⁵ bántasz ⁶ — azt, ⁷ amire ⁸ büszke ⁹ vagy ¹⁰ ma. ¹¹	2
A lelkiismeret ¹² majd bekopog ¹³	3
s ¹⁴ nem lesz ¹⁵ emlék, ¹⁶ melyben ¹⁷ magadra ¹⁸ hagyna. ¹⁹	4
	5
Lesz ²⁰ vén ²¹ ebed ²² s az melléd ²³ települ. ²⁴	6
Nappal ²⁵ pihensz ²⁶ majd, ²⁷ széken ²⁸ szunyókálva, ²⁹	7
mert ³⁰ éjjel ³¹ félni ³² fogsz ³³ majd ³⁴ egyedül. ³⁵	8

¹ adv. ‘sometime/later’² perfect. vb. pref. *meg-* + vb. inf. *öregszik* ‘to grow/become old’ + 2nd pers. sg. inform. pres. indef.³ vb. *megbán* ‘to regret’: perfect. vb. pref. *meg-* + vb. *bán* ‘to mind (negatively)/be bothered’⁴ aux. vb. *fog* ‘to will’ + 2nd pers. sg. ind. pres. def. (e.g. *Meg fog bánni.*)⁵ adv. ‘how’⁶ vb. *bán* ‘to be bothered’ + caus. *-t*: ‘to hurt’ + 2nd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.⁷ *az* ‘that’ + acc. *-t*⁸ *ami* ‘that/which’ + subl. *-re* ‘onto’⁹ ‘proud’¹⁰ vb. *van* ‘to be’ + 2nd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.¹¹ ‘today’¹² arch. dial. *lelkí* ‘his/her soul’ (alt. *lelke*) + arch. dial. *ismereti* ‘his/her/its knowledge’ (alt. *ismerete*)

→ ‘(moral) conscience’

¹³ vb. pref. *be-* ‘inwardly’ + vb. *kopog* ‘to knock’¹⁴ poetic abbrv. *es* ‘and’ (does not count as a syllable)¹⁵ vb. *van* ‘to be’, 3rd pers. sg. ind. fut. indef.¹⁶ ‘memory’¹⁷ lit. *mely* ‘which/that’ + innes. *-ben* ‘in’¹⁸ *maga* ‘oneself/itself’ + subl. *-ra* ‘into’¹⁹ vb. *hagy* ‘to allow/leave’ + 3rd pers. sg. cond. pres. indef. *-na*²⁰ vb. ‘to be’, 3rd pers. sg. ind. fut. indef.²¹ adj. ‘old’²² noun. *eb* ‘dog’ + 2nd pers. sg. single-poss. poss. → ‘your dog’²³ post. *mellé* ‘next to’ + 2nd pers. sg. single poss. *-d* → pron. ‘next yo you’²⁴ vb. ‘to settle somewhere’ + 3rd pers. sg. pres. ind. indef.²⁵ *nap* ‘day’ + instr. *-val* ‘with’ → *nappal*²⁶ vb. ‘to rest’ + 2nd pers. sg. inform. ind. pres. indef.²⁷ adv. ‘sometime/later’²⁸ *szék* ‘chair’ + super. *-en* ‘on’²⁹ (vb. pref. *el-* ‘away’ +) vb. *szunyókál* ‘to take a nap/to doze off’ + adv.-part. *-va*³⁰ conj. ‘because’³¹ poetic *éj* ‘night’ + instr. *-vel* ‘with’ → *éjjel*³² inf. vb. *fél* ‘to fear/be afraid of’³³ aux. vb. ‘to will’ + 2nd pers. sg. inform. ind. pres. def.³⁴ adv. ‘sometime/later’³⁵ *egy* ‘one’ + noun-forming *-ed* + adv.-forming *-ül* → ‘alone’

Árnyak ³⁶ ütnek ³⁷ a rezgő ³⁸ anyókára. ³⁹	9
	10
Az öreg ⁴⁰ kutya ⁴¹ néha ⁴² majd ⁴³ nyafog, ⁴⁴	II
de ⁴⁵ a szobában ⁴⁶ csend ⁴⁷ lesz, ⁴⁸ csupa ⁴⁹ rend ⁵⁰ lesz;	12
hanem ⁵¹ valaki ⁵² hiányozni ⁵³ fog ⁵⁴	13
a multból ⁵⁵ ahhöz ⁵⁶ a magányos ⁵⁷ csendhez. ⁵⁸	14
	15
Majd tipegsz ⁵⁹ s ⁶⁰ ha ⁶¹ eleget ⁶² totyogott ⁶³	16
rossz ⁶⁴ lábod, ⁶⁵ leülsz. ⁶⁶ Fönn ⁶⁷ aranykeretben ⁶⁸	17

³⁶ *árny* ‘shadow/ghost’ + non. pl. *-ak*

³⁷ vb. *üt* ‘to hit’ + 3rd pers. pl. ind. pres. indef. *-nek*

³⁸ poetic, arch. vb. *rezg* ‘to tremble/quiver’ (alt. *rezegeg*) + pres. part. *-ő*

³⁹ *anyó* ‘elderly woman’ + dim. *-ka* (term of endearment; rare. term of address to the wife by her husband in old age) + subl. *-ra* ‘onto’

⁴⁰ ‘old’

⁴¹ ‘dog’

⁴² adv. ‘sometimes’

⁴³ adv. ‘sometime/later’

⁴⁴ vb. ‘to whine’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

⁴⁵ conj. ‘but’

⁴⁶ *szoba* ‘room’ + innes. *-ban* ‘in’

⁴⁷ ‘silence/hush’

⁴⁸ vb. *van* ‘to be’, 3rd pers. sg. ind. fut. indef.

⁴⁹ ‘all/mere/pure’

⁵⁰ ‘order’

⁵¹ conf. ‘if’ + cond. or ‘when/once’ + *nem* ‘no’: conj. ‘but (following a negative sentence, making it positive)’

⁵² pron. pref. *vala* ‘some-’ + pron. rel. arch. *ki* ‘who (the person(s) that)’ → ‘somebody/someone’

⁵³ *hiány* ‘lack/absence/break’ + vb.-forming *-zik* → ‘(smb) to be missing/missed’, inf. *hiányozni*

⁵⁴ aux. vb. *fog* ‘to will’

⁵⁵ **mult?** rare, past part. ‘past’ + elative *-ból* ‘from/out of’

⁵⁶ conf. ‘if’ + cond. or ‘when/once’ + allat. *-hoz* ‘towards’

⁵⁷ adv./adj. *magán* ‘separate[ly]’ + adj.-forming *-os* → ‘lonely (psych.)’

⁵⁸ ‘silence’ + allat. *-hez* ‘to’

⁵⁹ vb. *tipeg* ‘to toddle’ + 2nd pers. sg. inform. ind. pres

⁶⁰ poetic abrv. *es* ‘and’ (does not count as a syllable)

⁶¹ conf. ‘if’ + cond. or ‘when/once’

⁶² *elég* ‘enough’ + acc. *-et* → adv.

⁶³ vb. *totyog* ‘to toddle’ (syn. *tipeg*) + 2nd pers. form. ind. pres. indef.

⁶⁴ adj. ‘bad’

⁶⁵ *láb* ‘leg (human/animal)/foot/pillar/support/stand’ + 2nd pers. inform. poss. single-poss. *-od*

⁶⁶ vb. pref. *le-* completion/downward + *ül* ‘to sit’ → ‘to sit down’

⁶⁷ adv. ‘above’, alt. ‘fent/fenn’

⁶⁸ *arany* ‘gold’ + *keret* ‘frame’ + innes. *-ben* ‘in’

áll ⁶⁹	ifju ⁷⁰	képed. ⁷¹	Hozzá ⁷²	motyogod: ⁷³	18
"Nem	öletem ⁷⁴	meg, ⁷⁵	hiszen ⁷⁶	nem szerettem." ⁷⁷	19
"Mit ⁷⁸	is ⁷⁹	tehettem ⁸⁰	volna?" ⁸¹	— kérdezed, ⁸²	20
de ⁸³	fogatlan ⁸⁴	szád ⁸⁵	már ⁸⁶	nem válaszolhat; ⁸⁷	21
s ⁸⁸	ki ⁸⁹	a nap ⁹⁰	előtt ⁹¹	lehunyod ⁹²	22
alig ⁹⁴	várod, ⁹⁵	hogy ⁹⁶	feljöjjön, ⁹⁷	szemed, ⁹³	23
Mert ⁹⁹	ha ¹⁰⁰	elalszol ¹⁰¹ ,	ugrál ¹⁰²	majd ¹⁰³	24
				az ágy, ¹⁰⁴	25
					26

⁶⁹ vb. ‘to stand’⁷⁰ *ifju?* adj./noun ‘young’⁷¹ *kép* ‘picture’ + 2nd pers. sg. single-poss. poss. -ed⁷² pron. ‘to it/him/her’⁷³ vb. *motyog* ‘to mumble/mutter’ + 2nd pers. sg. ind. pres. def. -od⁷⁴ vb. *ölél* ‘to embrace’ + 1st pers. ind. past⁷⁵ perfect. vb. pref. *meg-* (with *ölél*)⁷⁶ conj. ‘as/because (smth obvious)’⁷⁷ vb. *szeret* ‘to love’ + 1st pers. sg. ind. past⁷⁸ inter. ‘what’⁷⁹ doublet of *és* ‘and’, adv. ‘also’⁸⁰ vb. *tesz* ‘to do’ + poten. -het + 1st pers. sg. ind. past⁸¹ vb. *van* ‘to be’ + 3rd pers. sg. cond. pres. ‘would be’⁸² vb. *kérdez* ‘to ask’ + 2nd pers. sg. ind. pres.⁸³ adv. ‘how!/conj. ‘but/surely’⁸⁴ *fog* ‘tooth’ + priv. adj.-forming -less⁸⁵ *száj* ‘mouth’ + 2nd pers. sg. single-poss. poss.⁸⁶ adv. ‘already/yet/any more’⁸⁷ *válasz* ‘reply/answer’ + vb.-forming -ol + poten. -hat + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.⁸⁸ poetic abbrv. *es* ‘and’ (does not count as a syllable)⁸⁹ adv. ‘out[wardly]’⁹⁰ *nap* ‘sun/day’⁹¹ *elő* ‘the front part of smth’ + locat. -tt ‘in front of/ahead of/before/prior to’⁹² vb. pref. *le-* completion/downward + vb. *huny* ‘to close (one’s eyes)’ + 2nd pers. sg. ind. pres. def.⁹³ *szem* ‘eye’ + 2nd pers. sg. single-poss. poss. -ed (but plural implied here!)⁹⁴ adv. ‘barely’⁹⁵ vb. *vár* ‘to wait’ + 2nd pers. sg. ind. pres. def.⁹⁶ conj. ‘that’⁹⁷ vb. pref. *fel-* ‘upwards’ (see also *föl-*) + vb. *jön* ‘to come’ + 3rd pers. sg. subj. pres. indef.⁹⁸ ‘moon’ + acc. -(a)t⁹⁹ conj. ‘because’¹⁰⁰ conf. ‘if’ + cond. or ‘when/once’¹⁰¹ vb. pref. *el-* ‘away’ + vb. *alszik* ‘to sleep’ → ‘to fall asleep’ + 2nd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.¹⁰² vb. *ugrik* ‘to jump’ + freq. -ál → ‘to bounce/leap (repeatedly)’¹⁰³ adv. ‘sometime/later’¹⁰⁴ ‘bed’

mint ¹⁰⁵ a csikó, ¹⁰⁶ hogy a hámot ¹⁰⁷ levesse. ¹⁰⁸	27
S ¹⁰⁹ a félelem ¹¹⁰ tünődik, ¹¹¹ nem a vágy, ¹¹²	28
a fejedben: ¹¹³ Szeress-e, ¹¹⁴ ne ¹¹⁵ szeress-e.	29
	30
Magadban ¹¹⁶ döntök ¹¹⁷ el. ¹¹⁸ Én ¹¹⁹ fájlalom, ¹²⁰	31
hogy nem felelhetek, ¹²¹ ha ¹²² kérdez: ¹²³ él-e. ¹²⁴	32
Mert ¹²⁵ elfárad ¹²⁶ bennem ¹²⁷ a fájdalom, ¹²⁸	33
elalszik, ¹²⁹ mint ¹³⁰ a gyermek ¹³¹ s én is véle. ¹³²	34

1936. nov.

¹⁰⁵ conj. ‘like’

¹⁰⁶ ‘foal’

¹⁰⁷ *hám* ‘harness’ + acc. -(o)t

¹⁰⁸ vb. *levet* ‘to buck/throw off’ + 3rd pers. sg. subj. pres. def.

¹⁰⁹ poetic abbrv. *es* ‘and’

¹¹⁰ vb. *fél* ‘to be afraid’ + noun-forming *-elem* → fear’

¹¹¹ **tünődik?** vb. ‘to ponder/wonder’

¹¹² ‘desire/longing’

¹¹³ *fej* ‘head’ + 2nd pers. sg. single-poss. poss. *-ed* + innes. *-ben* ‘in’

¹¹⁴ vb. *szeret* ‘to love’ + 2nd pers. sg. subj. + polar inter. *-e*

¹¹⁵ *nem* becomes *ne* in imperative/subjunctive

¹¹⁶ *maga* ‘oneself’ + 2nd pers. sg. single poss. *-d* + iness. *-ban* ‘in’

¹¹⁷ perfect. vb. pref. *el-* + vb. *dönt* ‘to decide’ + 2nd pers. sg. ind. pres. def.

¹¹⁸ perfect. vb. pref. *el-*

¹¹⁹ pron. ‘I’

¹²⁰ vb. *fáj* ‘to hurt’ + vb.-forming *-lal* → literary, arch. ‘to regret’ + 1st pers. sg. ind. pres. def.

¹²¹ *fél* ‘human being’ + vb.-forming *-el* → vb. *felel* ‘to answer/reply’ + poten. 1st pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

¹²² conf. ‘if’ + cond. or ‘when/once’

¹²³ arch. vb. *kérd* ‘to ask/question’ + 2nd pers. sg. ind. pres. def.

¹²⁴ vb. *él* ‘to live’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

¹²⁵ conj. ‘because’

¹²⁶ perfect. vb. pref. *el-* + vb. *fárad* ‘to tire/to be tired’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

¹²⁷ pron. *benne* ‘inside smth/smb’ + 1st pers. sg. pers. *-m*

¹²⁸ vb. *fáj* ‘to ache’ + noun-forming *-dalom* → ‘pain/grief/sorrow’

¹²⁹ perfect. vb. pref. *el-* + vb. *alszik* ‘to sleep’ → ‘to fall asleep’ + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

¹³⁰ conj. ‘like’

¹³¹ arch. ‘child’, alt. *gyerek*

¹³² poetic, arch. form of *vele* ‘with it/him/her’

Chapter 5

1936

Csak az olvassa versemet,	I
ki ismer engem és szeret,	2
mivel a semmiben hajóz	3
s hogy mi lesz, tudja, mint a jós,	4
	5
mert álmaiban megjelent	6
emberi formában a csend	7
s szívében néha elidőz	8
a tigris meg a szelid Őz.	9

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