



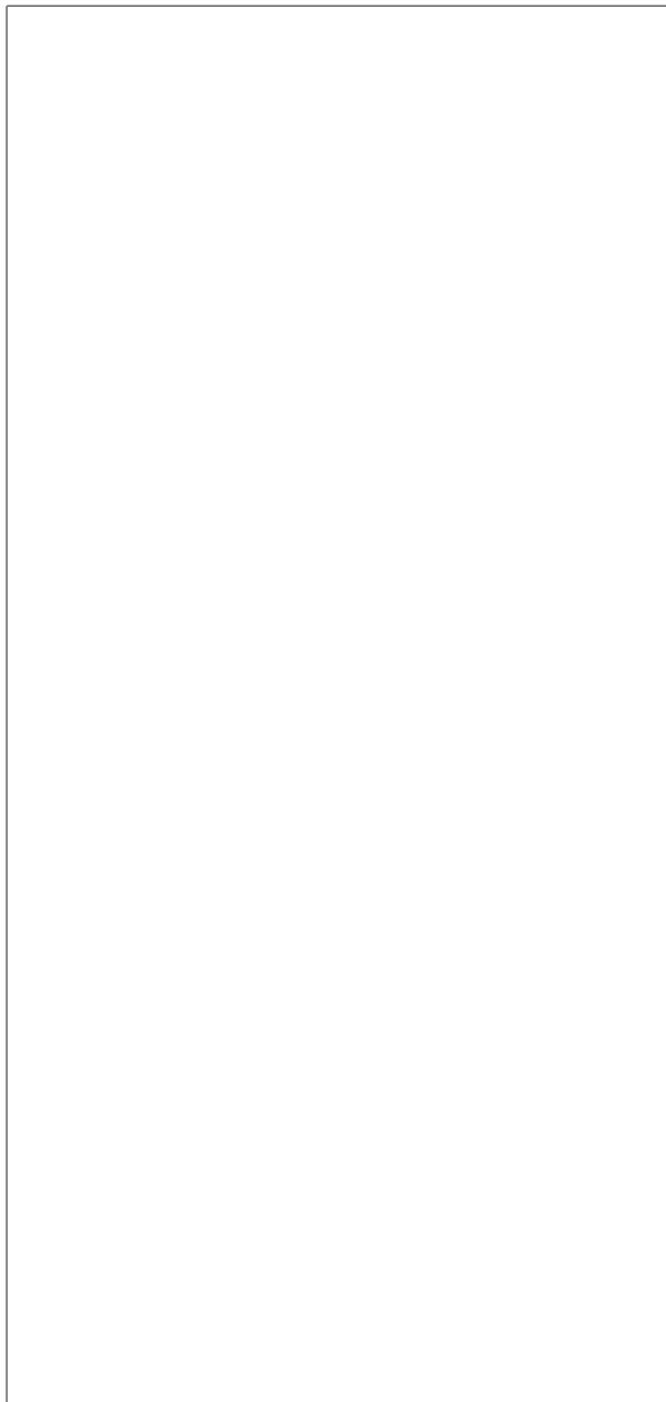
A large, abstract graphic at the top of the page features a complex, swirling pattern of black and white concentric circles and radial lines, resembling a stylized sun or a microscopic view of a cell. The pattern is contained within a rectangular frame with torn edges at the bottom, suggesting a piece of paper.

# RUNNING ON

CHRISTIAN RINDERKNECHT

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# Running On

Christian Rinderknecht

2024

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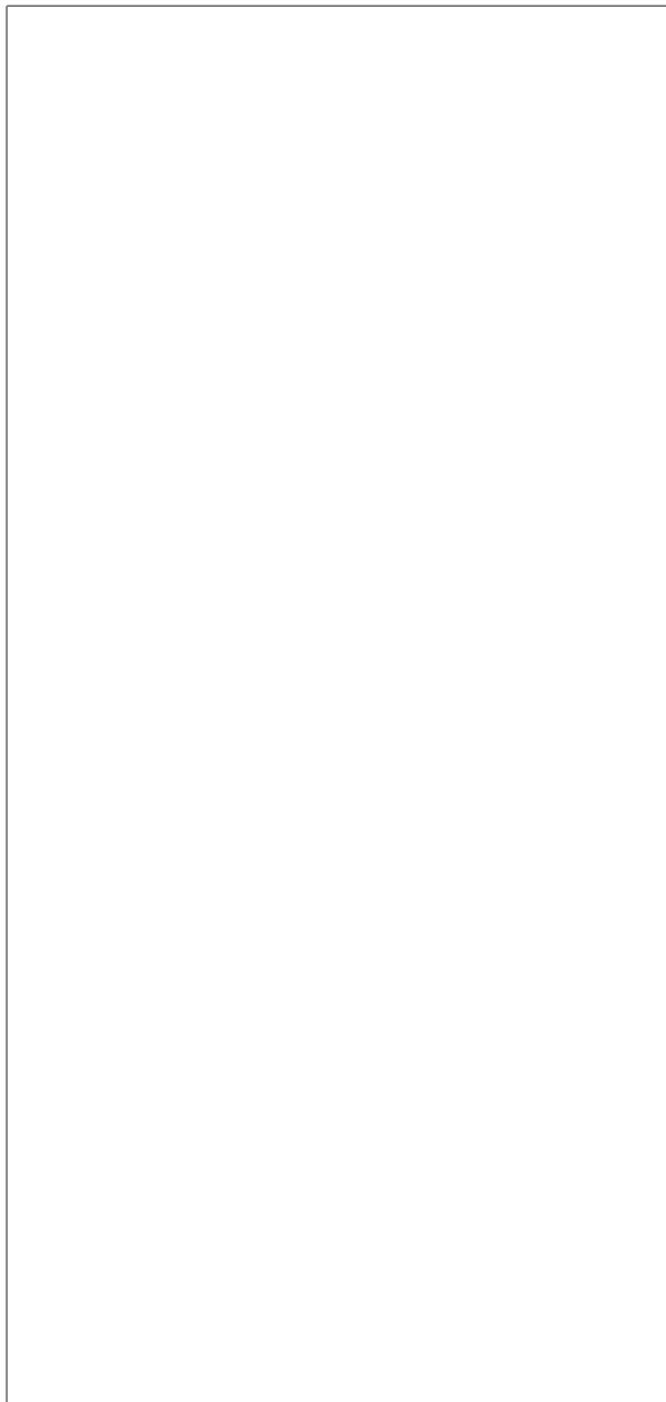
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To Réka Dudás.

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# I

Like a cup of tea  
overflowing

she keeps going places  
unexpected  
beyond will and power

drawing silhouettes  
of sweet fragrance  
on this white morning

and I can't help but clutch  
at the burning tablecloth

again and again

I drape this tainted love  
over my broken heart  
and I keep going places  
unexpected

like a make-believe ghost  
haunting cups of tea  
with trembling faces.



## II

Without a thought  
you hand me a second jar

Without a thought  
I open it and you smile  
in profile  
at this intimacy  
like a wife

Hidden in plain sight  
I wish we were them

secret delights  
that can touch  
and be open  
without a thought.

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### III

Late among the guests  
shining and laughing  
at brilliant jokes

we share one last drink  
with two ice cubes

Side by side  
complicit and beautiful

reflecting the moonlight

fatal icebergs  
always  
float in a world of silence

always  
shortchange the stars  
ninety percent

below the surface.

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**IV**

Her dangling arms  
abandoned to the wind  
like lianas

gently beat to the rhythm  
of her footsteps

oblivious to the choir  
of the forest around us  
whispering

staring  
at the divine pendulums

waiting for a sign

as I do

know the wild deer  
invisible yet so close

Hear its deep chest  
darkly drumming  
an untamed song

about you.

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# V

What a waste  
I tell myself

this whole bread  
stale  
which you forgot  
at the back of the cupboard

I remember the loaf  
warm and tender  
like a promise  
of young love

and

— Let's make French toasts!  
you say.

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## VI

Cheerfully  
you guide me through  
the physical laws

of magnetism  
between opposites

of forward  
and reverse phases

of tension  
and discharge

Finally  
I listen to you  
only with gravity

weak  
within arm's reach.

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## VII

When you go through my lines  
with me

sometimes  
I slip in my own words  
and you want to slip too

with me

a blank page.

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## VIII

Away

birch trees  
bathed  
in warm sunlight

Close

your white fingers  
combing  
your golden hair

Blinded

you guide my hands  
to the clear waters  
of the fountain

Thirsty

from your lips  
the gulp  
eclipses the sun.

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## IX

You used to hide in my books  
like in crannies and nooks

I would find you in Neruda  
sieving my favourite pages  
for a nugget of my soul

but metaphors whispered  
in ways I could not  
in ways I dared not

until I found a curl of hair  
you left in a margin

Suddenly

a prod to the brass spring  
sends my heart palpitating  
like a broken watch

Bent over those pages  
on the corner of a table  
the words fade to white  
like a film overexposed  
to the halo of your blond hair

only leaving behind  
the offbeat heart  
of a blind man.

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## X

Tonight you open for me  
an alchemy book

By the oil lamp  
flickering  
the mute book speaks  
in crucibles and symbols

of wild roses blooming  
on a lover's grave

of a split pomegranate  
under two half moons

of bellows sighing  
over furnace anew

of the mystical kiss  
of water and fire

of the geography  
of beauty spots

a secret zodiac for all senses  
on your body of soft amber  
where I die and am reborn.

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**XI**

Do you remember  
how we used to play  
winter in summer?

I'd furrow your hair  
with the tip of my tongue  
and the field would shiver  
under the plough

I'd sit behind you  
and embrace you like a coat  
my breath sending a frisson  
down your spine

I'd pretend to sled  
my hands on your waist  
and your nervous laughter  
would melt my heart

As exhausted as the day  
you'd fall back on me  
and our breaths  
like geysers  
would ascend into the starry night

slowly spinning  
around our cold noses

against each other

in the equator of my arms  
around you.

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## XII

Once  
through a window  
of the log cabin  
at dawn

we caught  
the shivering world  
transfixed  
watching its reflection  
in the dew

In a blink  
the round mirrors  
of iridescent water  
had formed  
a boundless kaleidoscope  
and showed each other

your dreamy eyes  
in vision wide

and wondered.

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## XIII

Already the avid hour  
swallows  
the shores of the world

Towards the horizon  
shadows pursue whispers  
lost among the graves  
along the walls

From his skull  
the poet sees everywhere  
ink flooding in

Yet you arise  
in the still second  
of the vault

illuminating the doorway  
with your bright face  
smiling down on me

simple and elegant  
like a blade

In a sarabande  
you seem to say  
come outside  
in the fields of blue

and let your heart  
slowly beat the drum  
of another day

Let this long night  
surprise you  
with a blue moon.

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## XIV

The dying day shrinks  
between the clouds  
and the rain starts drawing  
mirrors in the mud

until darkness drowns  
the match of eloquence  
and needles start piercing  
the firmament  
with countless suns

They blink leagues away  
like you used to

when you stretched over me  
like a constellation  
and kissed me distantly

Now on my knees  
my lips still reach for the stars  
but the gulp is dirty water.



xv

Quietly set against the light  
you are perfectly framed

I don't care what they think  
about the optics of love  
about the perfect shot  
at wild happiness

Like a forest  
leaning against the twilight

you harbour within yourself  
multitudes  
that murmur darkly like one  
and suddenly go silent  
whenever someone laughs

Slowly I dare a hand  
to your black hair

shadow amongst shadows

but you are startled by my eyes  
like those of a silent film actor  
in a close-up

Caught in my headlights  
this magnificent soul of yours  
hesitates before flitting away

leaving me in awe  
quietly peering into your night.

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## XVI

*In my brimming eyes*

the hinterland  
suddenly  
meets a rising tide

*a painting by Turner*

of ripped curtains of mist  
behind an old boat  
tugged to her last berth  
to be broken up

*where flowing waters wash*

beams and lashes across

*your overcast eyelines*

wrecked by promises  
lying eerily at the bottom  
of your Black Sea

*magnificent and haunting*

you follow again the wind  
moaning in faraway sails.

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**XVII**

*I raise my standard like a sail*

catching oblique sunbeams  
from the fleeing horizon  
on the seas  
above the firmament

*and I set the course*

for your heart  
overturned  
like an inkwell on a letter

*to you*

for I smuggle jewels  
from the celestial orbs

*under the cover of night*

I will show you  
my treasure  
quaint and eccentric

*like a comet*

always feeling the pull  
to your circular orbit

*from an archipelago of solitude*

because the island  
comes to the shipwrecked.

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## XVIII

Under a coat of ermine  
dreams offer the skies  
echos scattered away

on the white page

the inkwell overturns  
like the horizon

Under shroud and vermin  
the yearning soul cries  
echos scattered away

on the snow field

darkness many returns  
flood the horizon.

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**XIX**

Those clear eyes  
clearer yet this morning  
to have loved another

A clearer sky  
whose rising Sun  
left two blue puddles  
where you search for me  
amid the dew.

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## XX

Sleds rush downhill

each bump threading a note  
to the braids of our life lines  
to the necklaces of our joy

Like them  
I draw invisible parallels  
on immaculate pages

You hide and seek  
with your pale hands  
and your panting for breath  
sends a long shiver down

blending with that of winter

I caress the blank pages  
of a book without cover  
conjuring up your silhouette  
under my fingers

trembling on soft hills

my breath is taken away  
at each descent  
and locked in  
at each ascent!

Exhausted on the bed sheets  
we watch passing clouds  
and I quench my thirst  
in the calm stream of your words  
before oblivion

Only remain these verses  
in Braille  
where I feel your steps  
towards the white paradise.

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## XXI

In your secret garden  
when the early light  
accounts for the world  
you prune the rosebushes

like the many queer lives  
within you that ask  
something always refused

You keep saying to them

*If I listened to you  
we would grow wild  
and who would love us then  
You can only feel and I see  
Go to your places and sleep*

But sometimes  
a whisper quivers  
and blooms under the sun

transfiguring you  
and making you divine  
in spite of yourself

before flitting away  
like a dream cut short

Will you ever be  
like that always  
for any one being?

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## XXII

In this waltz  
of oblivion and regrets

I step forwards  
and I forget  
all the lessons  
I swore to remember

You step backwards  
and you regret  
learning so much  
about me

Come

The third beat  
is not here yet  
We don't have to repeat  
the same missteps

against each other

let us stand still  
like that afternoon  
in the pouring rain  
when I warmed you  
in my arms.

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**XXIII**

Across the dinner table  
a basin of apples  
where you used to sit

classically framed and lit  
with the soft tones  
of your cheeks

full and ripe  
from your wide smile

where I used to sink  
my teeth for a taste  
of good and naughty

Is this still life still a life?

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## XXIV

Again she reaches up  
on one foot  
to my neck

and the world again  
is an old-fashioned waltz

slowing with a smile

like a ballerina  
on a music box  
she did her best

like the rest of us  
spinning on this Earth

raising our arms  
to the sky.

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## XXV

By the Seaside  
when everyone's going home

tired

an orange Sun is planed down  
by the swaying horizon

and grated zest dances  
on the waters

of salty pupils

by a Monet in a museum  
when everyone's going home.

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## XXVI

Stitched little doll  
you felt forgotten

needles in your heart  
when pressed  
against her bosom

so  
softly

you wished away  
the wise tailor  
mending your seams

Like you  
she was cursed

but so close  
that her heartbeat  
was already yours.

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XXVII

The wake of two passing boats  
joggled the lonely pier  
in the late evening

and it was love in a blink  
by the riverside

Rocked like buoys

bulging tears  
mirrored those tipsy ships  
larger than life

until night fell  
and your head leant softly  
like a wilting rose

Eyes closed  
you took his hand.

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## XXVIII

Eyes closed  
arms stretched  
you'd seek my neck

up

you'd bring your toes  
to the feast

laughing at the tasting

So I followed your footsteps  
to your neck  
which grew strong

up

from acorn to oak  
sheltering my tired hands

and now you pick me up  
so high  
I can't reach my feet

little brother.

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## XXIX

I like the way you feel  
about things

You pull sour grapes  
on a blanket at your feet  
and the night ripens  
with aromas known  
only to you

Like a blind woman  
telling fortunes  
you grope faces  
in your night  
full of constellations

so they might see  
they are not alone

I like the way you fill  
the blanks of my life

like the summer storm knocks  
on my windows  
and puts my sorrows to sleep  
after a silent day

Most of all  
I like the way you feel  
about me.

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XXX

As evening falls  
leaves start swirling  
in a corner of my heart  
and jangle joyfully

Like sparks  
twist and turn away  
from the crackling logs

midsummer Eve  
kindles promises  
of Adam's fall

away  
from the camp fire  
into our night.

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## XXXI

Playful like the echo  
you come back to me

and tickle my ears  
with your tongue  
in a curl

and breathe out shivers  
up and down my spine

Losing myself in your arms  
you are me and I am you  
in a sigh

I hear a distant memory  
but I don't recall  
what words are

or who spoke last.



## XXXII

As God didn't create  
the darkness and the waters  
above and below

also in my eyes

your silhouette diminishes  
like a sail towards the dusk

as I sigh

like a shipwrecked  
on the last embers

you are blameless.

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### XXXIII

The genuine heart of sadness  
is the hub of the wheel of life

Without it  
there is no journey  
and no hope

Yet it remains still  
and hopeless

Without it  
there is no carrying others  
and no love

Yet it remains lonely  
and loveless

as I love you.

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## XXXIV

I could never read you  
even blinded by love

and I used to feel your face  
like pages of Braille

Familiar passages  
are still punctuated  
by your teardrops

and your longhand  
still casts eyeshadows  
under my fingers

Now my eyesight is restored  
and I learnt to read  
modern novels

I finally understand  
ancient tales  
of love and despair  
in the palimpsest of life.

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**XXXV**

I love you  
like I love the dead

whispering in our ears  
words from another land

a breeze encouraging  
embers in our hearts

I love you  
like I love Cleopatra

sleeping on the same side  
of the world

always awakening late  
to the same regret

I love you  
like I love my funeral

for only the dead  
can forgive.

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## XXXVI

Breathtaking art is heart  
blown away  
beyond the threshold  
between said and unsaid

It is the prize of a quest  
you didn't know you had

so your last step  
is also your first  
on the beaten path  
of Renaissance

where angels  
with dark wings  
look fiercely after us

and invoke the tempest  
from the black treasure  
in your chest.

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## Death of Attila József

A lonely sleeper at night  
waits on railway tracks  
to be taken away

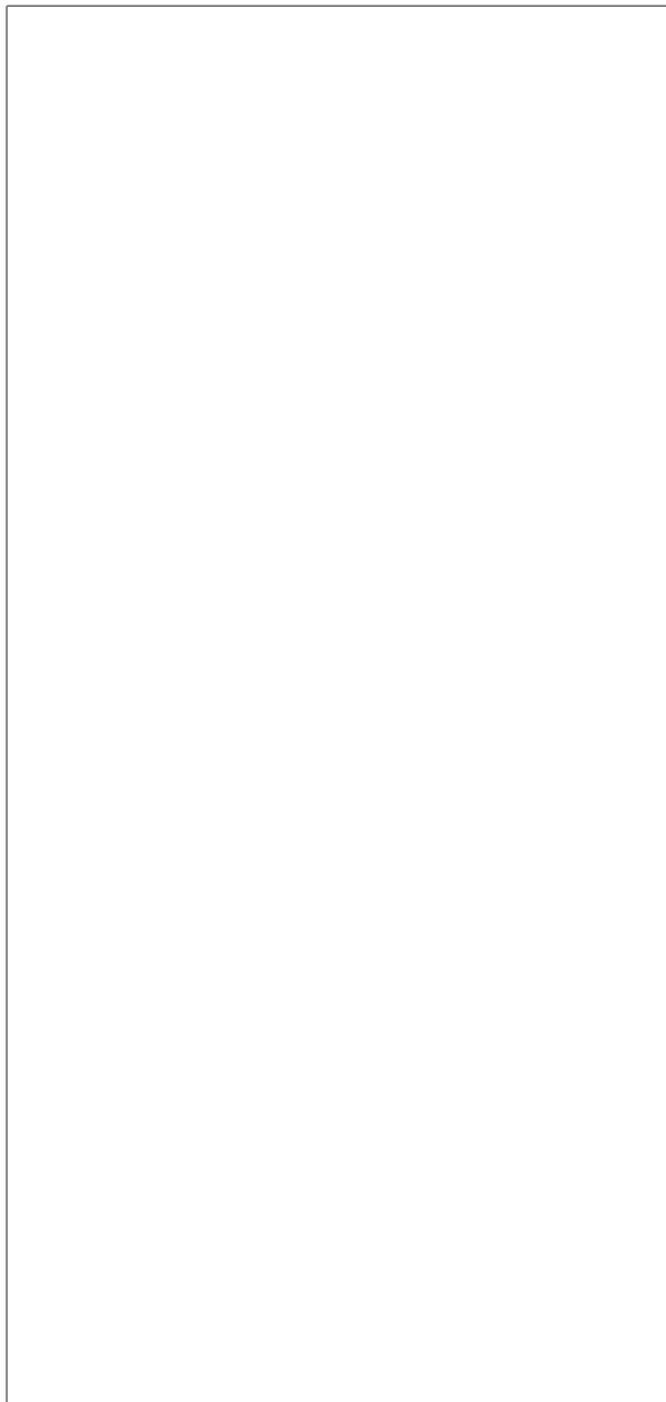
like a casket steadied  
on iron shoulders  
that can only journey down

Among his own shadow  
and the dreamy clanking  
of freight trains switching

the poet bids farewell  
to the cogwheels of trains  
and desires switching.

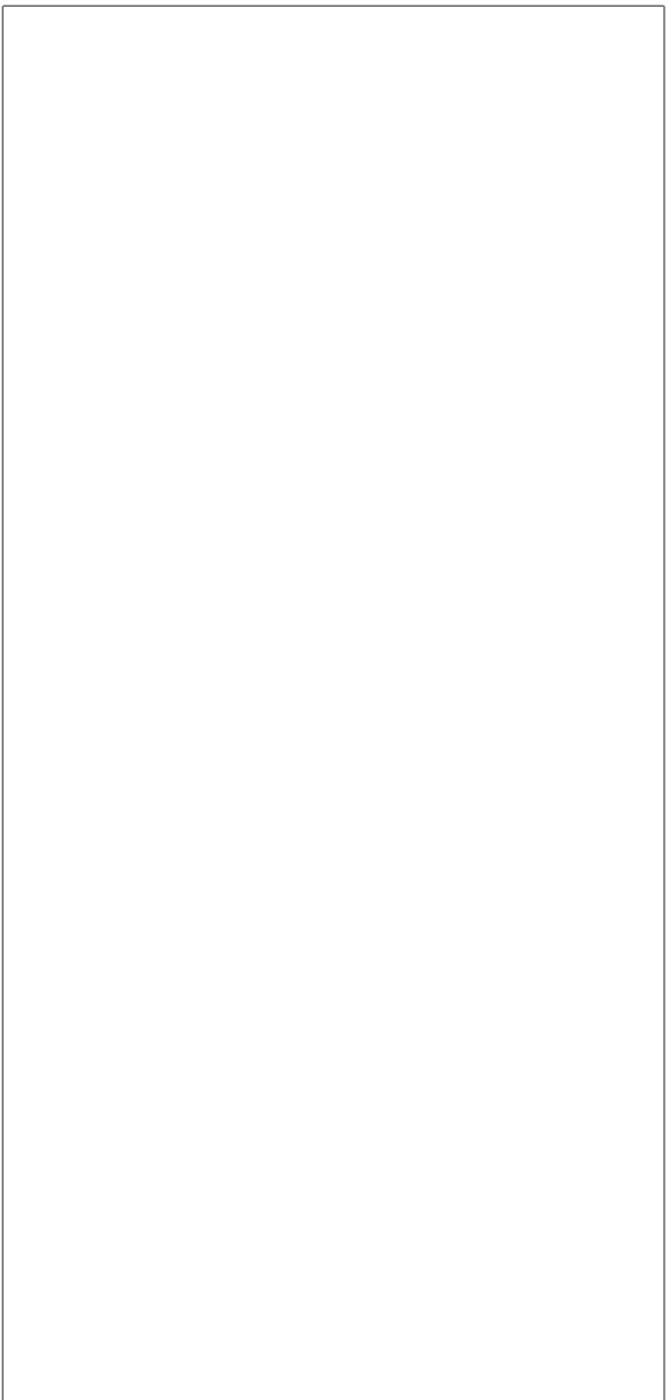
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