Collected Poems

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Chapter 1

1934

1.1 Consciousness (Eszmélet)

I

Dawn unbinds sky from earth and at its clear, soft word beetles and children spin forth into the daylight; there is no moisture in the air, the bright levity floats!

Overnight they alighted on the trees like small butterflies, the leaves.

Földtől¹ eloldja² az eget³ a hajnal⁴ s tiszta⁵, lágy⁶ szavára³ a bogarak,⁵ a gyerekek kipörögnek⁰ a napvilágra¹⁰; a levegőben¹¹ semmi pára¹², a csilló³³ könnyűség lebeg.⁴¹⁴ Az éjjel¹⁵ rászálltak¹⁶ a fákra,¹⁵ mint¹⁵ kis¹⁰ lepkék,²⁰ a levelek.²¹

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"föld "earth" + ablative -től "without/from"
    <sup>2</sup>el- "away" + vb. stem old "to unbind" + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. def. -ja
    ^{3}\acute{e}g "sky" + acc. -et \rightarrow eget
    4"dawn"
    5adj. "bright"
    6adj. "soft"
    ^{7}szó "voice", "word" + 3rd pers. sg. single poss. -a \rightarrow szava + subl. -ra
"onto/by" → szavára
    ^8bog\acute{a}r "beetle" + pl. -(a)k \rightarrow bogarak
    <sup>9</sup>vb. stem kipörög "to spin" + 3rd pers. pl. ind. pres. indef. -nek
   "onap "sun/day" + világ "world" + subl. -ra "onto/by"
    "levegő "air" + innessive -ben "in"
    12"moisture", "mist"
    ^{13}vb. stem csillog "to glitter" + adj.-forming -o 	o csillo; usually csillogo
   <sup>14</sup>vb. stem lebeg "to float (in the air)", 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.
    "15 éj "night" + instrumental -vel "with" 
ightarrow éjjel
   <sup>16</sup>pointed action rá- "on" + vb. stem száll "to fly/to land" + 3rd pers. sg.
past indef. -tak
   ^{17}fa "tree" + pl. -k + subl. -ra "onto/by" 
ightarrow fákra
    ¹8̃"like"
   19"small"
   <sup>20</sup> lepke "butterfly" + pl. -k 
ightarrow lepkék
   ^{21}level "leaf" + pl. -(e)k
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II

I saw paintings daubed with blue, red, yellow in my dreams and felt that everything was just so — not one speck of dust flying madly about. Now a blur, my dream reaches my members and the iron world is in order. During the day a moon rises inwardly and, when the night is out, a sun shines within.

Kék, piros, sárga, összekent²² képeket²³ láttam²⁴ álmaimban²⁵ és úgy éreztem,²⁶ ez a rend²⁷ egy szalló²⁸ porszem²⁹ el nem hibbant.³⁰ Most homályként³¹ száll tagjaimban³² álmom s a vas³³ világ a rend. Nappal³⁴ hold³⁵ kél³⁶ bennem³⁷ s ha³⁸ kinn³⁹ van az éj⁴⁰ — egy nap süt⁴¹ idebent.⁴²

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<sup>22</sup> össze "together" + ken "smear" \rightarrow összeken + 3rd pers. sg. past indef. -t
   ^{23}kép "picture" + pl. -(e)k + acc. -et
   <sup>24</sup>vb. stem lát "to see" + short base -t, 1st pers. sg. past def. -tam
   ^{25}álom "dream" + 1st pers. sg. poss. -a + poss. pl. -i + 1st pers. sg. pers. -m
+ innessive -ban "in" \rightarrow álmaimban
   <sup>26</sup>vb. stem érez "to feel", 1st pers. sg. past def.
   <sup>27</sup>"order"
   <sup>28</sup>vb. stem száll "to fly" + pres. part. -ó
   <sup>29</sup>"a speck of dust"
   ^{30}vb. stem hibban "to become imbalanced", arch. + past part. -t
   <sup>31</sup>homály "blur" + essive formal -ként "as"
   3^2 tag "member" + 1st pers. sg. poss. -ja + poss. pl. -i + 1st pers. sg. pers.
-m + innessive -ban "in" → tagjaimban
   33"iron"
   34 nap "day" + instrumental -val "with"
   <sup>36</sup>vb. stem "to rise", 3rd pers. sg. pres. def., arch. alt. kel
   <sup>37</sup>pron. benne "inside smth/smb" + 1st pers. sg. pers. -m
   38"when"
   39"outside"
   40"night"
   <sup>41</sup>vb. stem "to roast/to shine", 3rd pers. sg. pres. indef.
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42 adv. ide "here" + bent "within"

III

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

Sóvany⁴³ vagyok, csak kenyeret⁴⁴ eszem⁴⁵ néha,⁴⁶ e⁴⁷ léha,⁴⁸ locska⁴⁹ lelkek⁵⁰ közt⁵¹ ingyen⁵² keresek⁵³ bizonyosabbat,⁵⁴ mint⁵⁵ a kocska.⁵⁶ Nem dörgölődzik⁵⁷ sült⁵⁸ lopcska⁵⁹ számhoz⁶⁰ s szivemhez⁶¹ kisgyerek⁶² — ügyeskedhet,⁶³ nem fog⁶⁴ a macska⁶⁵ egyszerre⁶⁶ kint⁶⁷ s bent⁶⁸ egeret.⁶⁹

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43"slim", "thin", fig. "poor"
   <sup>44</sup>keny\acute{e}r "bread" + acc. -et \rightarrow kenyeret
   <sup>45</sup>vb. stem esz "to eat", rare without verbal pref., inf. enni + 1st pers. sg.
ind. pres. def. -em \rightarrow eszem
   <sup>46</sup>adv. "sometimes"
   <sup>47</sup>poetic abbrv. eme/ez "this"
   <sup>48</sup> improvident/idler"
   49 adj. "blethering"
   50 lélek "soul" + pl. -(e)k \rightarrow lelkek
    <sup>51</sup>post. "between/amid" from között: köz "interval" + locative -ött
   52 fig. arch. "in vain", usually "free of charge"
   53vb. stem keres "to seek" + 1st pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.
   54 adj. bizonyos "certain" + comp. -abb "more" + acc. -t
   55"like"
   56"a die"
   <sup>57</sup>vb. stem "to press against", 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.
   ^{58}vb. stem sül "to roast" + past part. -t
   <sup>59</sup>"chuck" (shoulder meat cut, probably pork)
   <sup>60</sup> száj "mouth" + 1st pers. sg. single poss. -m 	o szám + allative -hoz "to-
wards" → számhoz
   61 szivem "heart" + allative -hez "towards"
   62 kis "small" + gyerek "child"
   <sup>63</sup>vb. stem ügyesked "to be clever" + 3rd pers. sg. pres. potential -het
   <sup>64</sup>vb. stem "to hold", 3rd pers. sg. pers. indef.
   65"cat"
   66 adv. egyszer "at once" + ablative -re "onto"
   <sup>67</sup>adv. "outside"
   68 adv. "inside"
   ^{69}egér "mouse" + acc. -t → egeret
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IV

Just like a pile of logs, the world lies in a jumble; each thing presses, weighs on, holds fast to another, and so everything is determined. Only what is not has a shrub, only that will be that flower; what is falls to pieces. Akár⁷⁰ egy halom⁷¹ hasított⁷² fa,⁷³ hever⁷⁴ egymáson⁷⁵ a világ,⁷⁶ szorítja,⁷⁷ nyomja,⁷⁸ összefogja⁷⁹ egyik⁸⁰ dolog⁸¹ a másikát⁸² s így"just so" mindenik⁸³ determinált.⁸⁴ Csak⁸⁵ ami⁸⁶ nincs, annak⁸⁷ van bokra,⁸⁸ csak⁸⁹ ami lesz,⁹⁰ az a virág, ami van, széthull⁹¹ darabokra.⁹²

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<sup>70</sup>conj. literary "just like"
   71"pile/heap"
   <sup>72</sup>vb. stem hasít "to cleave/to split" + past. part. -ott
   ^{74}{\rm vb.} stem "to lie", 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.
   75 pron. egymás "each other/one another" + superessive -on "on"
   76"world"
   <sup>77</sup>vb. stem szorít "to press/to constrict", inf. szorítani + 3rd pers. sg. ind.
pres. def. -ja
   ^{78}vb. stem nyom "to weigh" + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. def. -ja
   <sup>79</sup>össze "together" + vb. stem fog "to hold" + 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. def.
-ja

<sup>80</sup>egy "one" + 3rd pers. pl. poss. -ik "of"
   81"thing"
   82 pron. másik "another" + acc. -at (-át?)
   83 adv. minden "everyone/everything"
   <sup>84</sup>Latin determinare + vb.-forming -ál "to determine" + past part. -t
   85 adv. "only"
   86 rel. pron. "which/that"
   <sup>87</sup>art. az "that" + attr. poss. -nak \rightarrow annak
   <sup>88</sup>bokor "shrub/bush" + 3rd pers. sg. single poss. -a
   90 vb. stem "to become", 3rd pers. sg. ind. fut. indef.
    91 vb. stem "to fall apart", 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.
   92 adv. darab "piece/chunk" + pl. -ok + subl. -ra "into"
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V

At the freight train station,
I lay down just so behind the tree's butt,
like a piece of silence;
a grey weed reached my mouth,
raw, strange-sweet.
Playing dead, I watched the guard, sensing what,
and the shadow on the quiet wagons
stubbornly leaping at the bright, dewy coal.

A teherpályudvaron⁹³
úgy⁹⁴ lapultam⁹⁵ a fa⁹⁶ tövéhez,⁹⁷
mint⁹⁸ egy darab⁹⁹ csönd¹⁰⁰; szürke¹⁰¹ gyom¹⁰²
ért¹⁰³ számhoz,¹⁰⁴ nyers,¹⁰⁵ különös-édes.
Holtan¹⁰⁶ lestem¹⁰⁷ az őrt,¹⁰⁸ mit¹⁰⁹ érez,¹¹⁰
s a hallgatag¹¹¹ vagónokon¹¹²
árnyát,¹¹³ mely¹¹⁴ ráugrott¹¹⁵ a fényes,¹¹⁶
harmatos¹¹⁷ szénre¹¹⁸ konokon.¹¹⁹

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<sup>93</sup>teher "freight" + pálya "track" + udvar "courtyard" (pályaudvar "train
station") + superessive -on "on"
   94 adv. "so (in this/that manner)"
   95 vb. stem lapul "to lie low" + 1st pers. sg. past indef. -tam
   96"tree"
   ^{97}t\ddot{o} "base of the stem of a plant" + 3rd pers. sg. single poss. -e "of" \rightarrow t\ddot{o}ve
+ allative -hez "towards" \rightarrow \hat{tovehez}
   98"like"
   99"piece"
   silence", alt. csend
   ю adj. "grey"
   102 "weed"
   103vb. stem ért "to reach/to understand", arch. "to touch", 3rd pers. sg.
   "104sz\acute{a}j" mouth" + 1st pers. sg. single poss. -m \rightarrow sz\acute{a}m + allative "towards"
-hoz → számhoz
   105 adj. "raw"
   106 holt "dead" + adv.-forming -an
   <sup>107</sup>vb. stem les "to spy" + 1st pers. sg. past indef. -tem
   ^{108}őr "guard" + acc. -t
   109 inter. "what"
   ^{110}vb. stem "to feel/to smell/to taste", 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.
   "vb. stem hallgat "to remain silent/to listen" + adj.-forming -ag
   <sup>112</sup> vagón "wagon" + pl. -ok + superessive -on "on"
   "3árny "shadow/ghost" + acc. -at (-át?)
   "4literary, "which/that"
   <sup>115</sup>pointed action ra- "at" + vb. stem ugrik "to leap/to jump" + 3rd pers.
sg. ind. past. indef. -ott \rightarrow ugrott
   п6 adj. "bright"
   117 adj. "dewy"
   <sup>118</sup>szén "coal" + subl. -re "onto"
   <sup>119</sup>adj. konok "stubborn" + superessive -on "on (that manner)"
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VI

Behold the anguish inside, yet the explanation lies outside.
Your wound is the world — on fire, burning up — and you feel your soul, the fever.
You are captive as long as your heart rebels — then you are free if it indulges not building for yourself a house where a landlord settles in.

Im¹²⁰ itt a szenvedés¹²¹ belül,¹²²
ám¹²³ ott kívül¹²⁴ a magyarázat.¹²⁵
Sebed¹²⁶ a világ — ég,¹²⁷ hevül¹²⁸
s te lelkedet¹²⁹ érzed,¹³⁰ a lázat.¹³¹
Rab¹³² vagy, amíg¹³³ a szíved¹³⁴ lázad¹³⁵ — úgy¹³⁶ szabadulsz,¹³⁷ ha¹³⁸ kényedül¹³⁹
nem raksz¹⁴⁰ magadnak¹⁴¹ olyan¹⁴² házat,¹⁴³
melybe¹⁴⁴ háziúr¹⁴⁵ települ.¹⁴⁶

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120 literary, abbrv. ime "here is/behold"
121 vb. stem szenved "to suffer" + noun-forming -és
122"inside"
123 poetic, interj. contrad. "but"
124 adv. "outdoor/outside"
<sup>125</sup>vb. stem magyaráz "to explain" + noun-forming -at
126 seb "wound" + 2nd pers. sg. single poss. -ed
127 vb. stem "to be on fire", 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.
128 vb. stem "to grow hot", 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.
<sup>129</sup> lélek "soul" + 2nd pers. sg. single poss. -ed \rightarrow lelked + acc. -et
130 vb. stem érez "to feel", 2nd pers. sg. ind. pres. def.
<sup>131</sup>láz "fever" + acc. -at
132"captive"
133 adv. "as long as"; "until" if followed by negated verb
134 szíved "heart" + 2nd pers. sg. single poss. -ed
<sup>135</sup>vb. stem to rebel, 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.
<sup>136</sup> úgy ... ha ... "then ... if ..."
<sup>137</sup> szabad "free" + vb.-forming -ul + 2nd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef. -sz
<sup>139</sup>literary, vb. stem "to indulge", 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.
140 vb. stem rak "to set up/to build", 2rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef. -52
^{141} maga "oneself" + 2nd pers. sg. single poss. -d + dat. -nak
<sup>142</sup>pron. "such/that kind of thing"
<sup>143</sup>ház "house" + acc. -at
144 literary, arch. mely which" + illative -be "into (the inside of)"
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¹⁴⁵ *báz* "house" + adj.-forming "of the" -i + úr "master"

¹⁴⁶vb. stem "to settle (somewhere)", 3rd pers. sg. ind. pres. indef.

VII

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.

Én fölnéztem¹⁴⁷ az est¹⁴⁸ alól¹⁴⁹ az eget¹⁵⁰ fogaskerekére¹⁵¹ — csilló¹⁵² véletlen¹⁵³ szálaiból¹⁵⁴ törvényt¹⁵⁵ szőtt¹⁵⁶ a mult¹⁵⁷ szövőszéke¹⁵⁸ és megint¹⁵⁹ fölnéztem az égre¹⁶⁰ álmaim¹⁶¹ gőzei¹⁶² alól s láttam,¹⁶³ a törvény szövedéke¹⁶⁴ mindig¹⁶⁵ fölfeslik¹⁶⁶ valahol.¹⁶⁷

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<sup>147</sup>vb. pref. föl- "up/upwards" + vb. stem néz "to look" + 1st pers. sg. past.
def. -tem
  148 arch. "(in the) evening"
  149 al "lower part" + abl. -l "from"
   <sup>150</sup> ég "sky" + acc. -(e)t
   <sup>151</sup> fogas "tooth" + kerék "wheel": "cogwheel" + 3rd pers. sg. single poss. -e
+ subl. -re "towards"
   ^{152} vb. stem csillog "to glitter" + adj.-forming -o 	o csilloj; usually csillogo
   153"chance"
   "thread" + 3rd pers. sg. poss. -a + poss. pl. -i + elative -b\acute{o}l
"from/out of"
   "155 törveny "law/principle" + acc. -t
   156 vb. stem sző "to weave", past part.
  <sup>157</sup> múlt? rare. past part. "past", inf. múlik
   <sup>158</sup>szövő "weaver" + szék "chair": "loom" + 3rd pers. sg. single poss. -e
   159 meg "again" (short action) + adv.-forming -int
  <sup>160</sup>ég "sky" + subl. sg. -re "onto"
   ^{161}álom "dream" + 1st pers. sg. poss. -a + poss. pl. -i + 1st pers. sg. pers. -m
  ^{162}gőz "steam, vapour" + 3rd pers. sg. poss. -e + pl. poss. -i
  <sup>163</sup>vb. stem lát "to see" + short base -t, 1st pers. sg. past def. -tam
  <sup>164</sup>szövedék "fabric/cloth/web" + 3rd pers. sg. single poss. -e
  <sup>165</sup>mind "always" (repetition) + term. "until" -ig
   166 vb. pref. föl- "up/upwards"+ arch., poetic, vb. stem feslik "to come
unstitched", 3rd pers. sg. pres. indef.
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167" somewhere"

VIII

The silence listened intently — One struck. You could visit your childhood; between the damp cement walls you could imagine a bit of freedom — I thought. And as soon as I stood up, the stars, the Great Bear indeed were glittering above, like bars above the silent cell.

Fülelt¹⁶⁸ a csend¹⁶⁹ — egyet¹⁷⁰ ütött¹⁷¹
Fölkereshetnéd¹⁷² ifjúságod;¹⁷³
nyirkos¹⁷⁴ cementfalak¹⁷⁵ között¹⁷⁶
képzelhetsz¹⁷⁷ egy kis sabadságot¹⁷⁸ —
gondoltam.¹⁷⁹ S hát¹⁸⁰ amint¹⁸¹ fölállok¹⁸²
a csillagok,¹⁸³ a Göncölök¹⁸⁴
úgy fénylenek¹⁸⁵ fönt,¹⁸⁶ mint a rácsok¹⁸⁷
a hallgatag¹⁸⁸ cella¹⁸⁹ fölött.¹⁹⁰

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168 fül "ear" + vb.-forming -el: "to listen (intently)" + 3rd pers. ind. past
indef. -t
   169" silence". alt. csönd
   ^{170}eq\gamma + acc. -t
   <sup>171</sup>vb. stem \ddot{u}t "to strike" + 3rd pers. sg. ind. past indef. -(\ddot{o})tt
   <sup>172</sup> föl- "up/upwards" + keres "to seek": "to visit" + pot. "may/might" het
+ 2nd pers. sg. ind. pres. cond. -ned, alt. felkeres
   <sup>173</sup>adj. ifjú "young" + noun-forming -ság (state of being): "youth" + 2nd
pers. informal sg. poss. single poss. -od: "your childhood" (informal)
   174 adj. "humid/damp"
   ^{175}cement "cement"+ fal "wall" + pl. -ak
   ^{176}post. "between/amid", k\ddot{o}z "interval" + locative -\ddot{o}tt
   ^{177} kép "image" + vb.-forming -(z)el: "to imagine" + pot. -het + 2nd pers.
sg. ind. pres. -sz
   <sup>178</sup> szabad "free" + -ság (state of being): "freedom" + acc. -at
   <sup>179</sup>vb. stem gondol "to think/plan/guess/worry" + 1st pers. sg. ind. past
indef./def. -tam
   <sup>180</sup>"back body","well...", "then/and/but" (questioning back), "surely/of
   <sup>181</sup>az + mint "like": "as soon as", literary "as"
   <sup>182</sup>föl- "up/upwards" + vb. stem láll "to stand" + 1st pers. sg. ind. pres.
indef. -ok, alt. felállok
   ^{183} csillag "star" + pl. -ak
   <sup>184</sup> Göncöl + pl. -ök: "the Great Bear" (constellation)
   <sup>185</sup> fény "light" + freq. vb.-forming -lik: "to glitter" + 3rd pers. pl. ind. pres.
   186 adv. "above/up/awake/upstairs", alt. fent
   ^{187}rács "grid/grille" + pl. -ok
   <sup>188</sup>vb. stem hallgat "to remain silent/to listen" + adj.-forming -ag
   <sup>190</sup> föl- "up/upwards" + loc. -ött: "above", alt. elett
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IX

I heard iron weeping,
I heard rain laughing.
I saw that the past was cracked
and that only memories may be forgotten,
and how I cannot but love,
bending under my burdens —
why would I need to forge a weapon
out of you, golden self-awareness!

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Hallottam<sup>191</sup> sírni<sup>192</sup> a vasat,<sup>193</sup>
hallottam az esőt<sup>194</sup> nevetni.<sup>195</sup>
Láttam,<sup>196</sup> hogy<sup>197</sup> a mult<sup>198</sup> meghasadt<sup>199</sup>
s csak<sup>200</sup> képzetet<sup>201</sup> lehet<sup>202</sup> feledni;<sup>203</sup>
s hogy<sup>204</sup> nem tudok<sup>205</sup> mást,<sup>206</sup> mint<sup>207</sup> szeretni,<sup>208</sup>
görnyedve<sup>209</sup> terheim<sup>210</sup> alatt<sup>211</sup> —
minek<sup>212</sup> is<sup>213</sup> kell<sup>214</sup> fegyvert<sup>215</sup> veretni<sup>216</sup>
belőled,<sup>217</sup> arany<sup>218</sup> öntudat!<sup>219</sup>
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191 vb. stem hall "to hear" + 1st pers. sg. ind. past def. -ottam
   192 vb. stem sír "to cry/weep" + inf. -ni
   ^{193}vas "iron" + acc. -(a)t
   <sup>194</sup>vb. stem es, inf. esik + pres. part. -\ddot{o} + acc. -t
   195 vb. stem nevet "to laugh", inf. nevetni
   <sup>196</sup>vb. stem lát "to see" + short base -t, 1st pers. sg. past def. -tam
   <sup>197</sup>adv. "how"
   198 múlt? rare. past part. "past", inf. múlik
   <sup>199</sup>vb. pref. perfective meg- + vb. stem hasad "to crack/split apart" + past
part. -t
  200 adv. "only"
  <sup>201</sup>képzet "idea/image/notion" + acc. -t
  <sup>202</sup>pot. vb. van/lesz: "may be/may become" + 3rd pers. sg. ind.
  <sup>203</sup>lit. vb. stem feled "to forget", alt. felejt
  <sup>204</sup>adv. "how"
  <sup>205</sup>vb. stem tud "to know" or aux. "can + inf." + 1st pers. sg. ind. pres.
indef. -ok
  <sup>206</sup>adj. más "other/different" + acc. -t
  <sup>207</sup>comp. different degrees "than"
  <sup>208</sup>inf. vb. stem szeret "to love"
  <sup>209</sup>vb. stem görnyed "to bend (under a burden)" + adv.-forming -ve
   ^{210} teher "freight/burden" + 1st pers. sg. poss. mult. poss. -eim 	o terheim
   <sup>211</sup>post. al- "lower part"+ loc. -(a)tt
   ^{212}mi + dat. -nek: "for what"
   <sup>213</sup>doublet of és "and"
   <sup>214</sup>aux. vb. "must/need to/have to + inf."
   <sup>215</sup> fegyever "weapon" + acc. -t
   <sup>216</sup>inf. vb. "to hammer", alt. veretés
   ^{217}pron. bel\"ole "out of him/her/it" + 2nd pers. sg. -d
   <sup>218</sup>"gold/golden"
   <sup>219</sup> "self-awareness"
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