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The Balkans

Milorad Pejić

I've never anywhere seen a quince, but lindens bloom in Scandinavia also. Rinsed by the tea of rains, though, their scent is faint. Like a strong perfume, the scent of the Balkan linden tree in summer gets into both blankets and sweaters. Quinces rust on the wardrobes in cold bedrooms in the fall.

In the Balkans both good and evil are enlarged and so they are never boring. In their trap I fell a long time ago when as a child I was loved and transferred by all, smokers and alcoholics, from arms to arms, from lap to lap. I would scream and I would struggle, just for show, never with all my strength lest they drop me accidentally, lest I accidentally break free of them.

Milorad Pejić

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Translated by Omer Hadžiselimović

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