

VARIATIONS ON TZARA



JAN ŠKRDLIK



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VARIATIONS ON TZARA

ENGLISH VERSION BY **THOMAS McCOMB** AND **LUCIEN ZELL**

*Variations on verses from Tristan Tzara's poetry collection **Approximate Man***

Based on a fictional journey from planet Earth to "Seventh Heaven", the author meets again with the five women who most significantly influenced his past life and then with his current partner Jana Rosie. But the author needs to penetrate to an even higher space in order to finally be able to connect with his Being Self...

The title "Variations on Tzara" came from the fact that each of its poems begins with a quote of verse from the poetry collection "Approximate Man" ("L'Homme approximative") to pay tribute to its author, Tristan Tzara.

The book is supplemented with illustrations by Jana Rosie Dvořáková.

NINE COMMANDMENTS that is CONTENTS:

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-

MAP OF THE PILGRIM'S WAY

AUTHOR'S EPILOGUE

JAN ŠKRDLÍK
VARIATIONS
ON TZARA



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CONTENTUS PAUCIS LECTORIBUS

This novel in verse recounts
my journey through Seven Heavens
through Seven Chakras
my path amongst angels
amongst demons
my way through the midst of storms
to the silence of my soul . . .

---*autor*---

Motto:

An approximate man, like me, like you, reader, like all the rest . . .

Dedication:

For my father Jaroslav Škrdlík

Thanks

To Jana Rosie and to Zdeněk Hlavinka for valuable suggestions during the writing of this book. To Alfredo Rodríguez López-Vázquez for giving me his Spanish translation of Tzara's "Approximate Man" and thereby much valued inspiration. To Thomas McComb for the incredible perseverance and for his genuine heart-felt enthusiasm during the re-versifying of my novel into English. To Lucien Zell, who endowed this English version with the true skill of a renowned poet. To the entire translation team, namely those mentioned in the epilogue. To all who are spoken of in this newsuprealist novel in verse; in one way or another, you have all enriched my journey through life captured in it . . .



α-1

DO EVERYTHING WITH LOVE

"...l'œil blessé des rochers te plaint amèrement..."

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, XII/7/2

WOUNDED EYE OF ROCK CLIFFS

FEELS BITTER MERCY FOR YOU

Wounded eye of rock cliffs / feels bitter mercy for you . . . //

. . . run to father / (that time / many . . . //

— many years ago) / (mother far away / practicing . . . //

— violin) / Run to father / suddenly sinking . . . //

— on / wounded eye / of rock cliffs / greeting me . . . //

— when meeting storms / when falling on a shard of china / flying . . . //

— through my left face / . . . that face / which from time immemorial . . . //

— belongs to emotions . . . / And since then I know / that the path . . . //

— to my father / leads another way / and that women . . . //

— to be learned . . . //

— must be lived //

There exist nine kinds of angels: / *Alpha to Iota* /

all of whom entered my Life / these facts and more / this . . . //

— story . . . //

— reveals ///



α

OWN NOTHING

THE PLOT OF THE PREVIOUS PART:

In the previous foreword the Pilgrim returned to his childhood. His mother was emotionally remote, and his father was not able to make up for her lack of influence. When he was a one-year-old boy, a fall on a shard of china blinded him in his left eye.

*"...homme approximatif comme moi comme toi lecteur
et comme les autres..."*

T. Tzara, *L'Homme approximatif*, II/4/1, VIII/4/3, XIV/10/18

1

AN APPROXIMATE MAN, LIKE ME, LIKE YOU, READER, LIKE ALL THE REST

OWN NOTHING

α

An approximate man, like me, like you, reader /
like all the rest / approximate and even bleeding through . . . //

— us / yes, us: //

— rational beings, with . . . //

— features lost . . . //

— on the bottoms of abysses . . . //

. . . but first of all . . . //

. . . in that history, everyone around was approximate /

me / my mother / and also my sister / we all were /

there in that moonlit night / when things finally . . . //

— moved off / and in their midst we, who flew / immersed in a . . . //

— faint / drunk with unusual stories . . . //

— stories of remarkable vertigo //

Approximate people like me, like you, reader / like everybody else /

Only when we approached each other / things began . . . //

— to reach us //

— all ///

*"...l'usure de nos péchés évolue sans satellites
dans un univers étroit..."*

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, III/5/20

2
OWN NOTHING
α

THE USURY OF OUR SINS ORBITS WITHOUT SATELLITES IN A THIN UNIVERSE

The usury of our sins / orbits without satellites . . . /
in a thin universe / Thus: / Cough up the interest (!) /
. . . while sleeping / in a thin bedroom . . . between four //
— walls . . . //

≈≈≈≈

≈DREAM≈ 1

≈≈≈≈≈

In that "thin Universe" / my mother drifts to sleep / and I'm also /
tipping towards . . . / — sleep / on the "thin face" are "thin interests" /
that we didn't want to share / with . . . //

- anyone else / and on the body . . . //
- lightly trembling / as if encroaching / upon the . . . //
- hour of truth //

In that "thin Universe" / I was a famous actor / with a "thin moustache" /
and mother / (oddly) / clad / in hipster fashion / lying there /
in a ripped denim jacket / digging some music / through headphones /
I see myself again / as if it were today / see myself / bending over her /
and hearing my own voice again /
whispering: //

"Mummy / I hate you so much!" //

≈≈≈≈

≈≈≈≈≈

≈≈≈≈≈

///

*"...les rires grimpants ensemencent de tempête
les constellations d'abeilles..."*

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, VI/4/3

3

ESCALATING LAUGHTER SOWS, WITH A STORM, CONSTELLATIONS OF BEES

OWN NOTHING

α

Escalating laughter / sows, with a storm . . . /
— constellations of bees / Oh, how much they . . . /
— tormented us . . . / with their stinging . . . /
— those bees! //

My mother shouts at me / how irresponsible I have been /
and I shout back: / "You're an evil little girl (!) /
burning ladybirds / with a magnifying glass! /
Little girl (!) / with a magnifying glass in her . . . //
— hand!!" //

At the same moment my sister comes / rubbing her eyes /
Mother accosts her / in an imperious tone: /
"I've recorded it all! / You'll see!" /
And she plays it back / pretty much from the beginning on her . . . //
— tape recorder //

It resounds again: / "I hate you so much!" / And after that /
how we quarrelled / but I was telling her / "Mummy /
you should listen to that recording . . . / — each and every day . . . /
you should listen to it . . . / — as often as possible (!) / and then, maybe /
you would realize / what you should have already . . . //
— understood: / You need . . . / — therapy!" //

. . . and with that I left / that abode //

I don't want to own anything anymore / here on Earth /
I don't want to own anything anymore / ever again /
I don't want to own anything anymore / not any . . . //

— any one of those things ///

"...vision sur vision et ombre découpée d'ombre..."

T. Tzara, *L'Homme approximatif*, VII/1/25

4

VISION AFTER VISION AND SHADOW

CUT OUT OF SHADOW

α OWN NOTHING

Vision after vision and shadow / cut out of shadow /

On the street I meet an old woman / as if time cut her out from . . . //

— roots of trees / she is begging for help / from all the passers-by . . . //

— but no one hears her / (at least no one appears to) . . . //

— she is asking for help . . . / she is asking those passing by . . . //

— for protection / but the only one / willing . . . //

— to hear her out / the only willing soul is . . . //

— me //

If only I had known! //

She's insisting that she took / the wrong tablet / a mistaken pill /

and now she's endangered / her life's at risk / I find a hospital /

in a corner of the square / At last! / I can now /

leave everything . . . //

— here! //

In the opposite corner / hidden in another / "cut-out shadow" /

awaits / my vehicle / my old car, a . . . //

— Ford Mondeo ///

“...tu entres tu regardes tu te tâtes les poches...”

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, III/4/1

5

YOU ENTER, LOOKING ROUND, RUMMAGING THROUGH POCKETS

OWN NOTHING

α

You enter, looking round, rummaging through pockets . . . //

. . . since you still do not perceive / the aim of your journey . . . //

. . . do not understand that sin / is living . . . / — what is not . . . //

. . . do not understand that sin consists / in not living a real . . . //

. . . touch of truthfulness . . . //

. . . do not understand / how your pockets / gained their emptiness . . . //

. . . since the air is clear / and storms stormed away . . . //

. . . storms, those thieves (!) / who are not what . . . //

. . . we thought them to be . . . / those crooked liars / meanwhile . . . //

. . . only so they deceive with . . . / — bodies . . . //

. . . and in the morning, they robbed us / seized by dizziness . . . //

. . . and meanwhile / on the backseat / of my Ford Mondeo . . . //

— sleeps my son . . . //

— Filip . . . //

He slept / (surprisingly) / the greater part of the journey there /
but it bore / the whole way / a trace of his . . . //

— presence //

I am thinking intensively / what with all of this /
does he wish to tell me . . . //

— the Voice of Providence . . . //

. . . oh, now I recall! / I too / was falling asleep this way /
as my father travelled / to his own . . . / — heart . . . /
from planet Earth to . . . //

— *Seventh Heaven!!!* ///

“...harassé de visions touffues tu retournes au secours
de ton cœur en étranger...”

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, VII/1/23-24 (25-27)

6

**HARASSED BY DENSE VISIONS
YOU RETURN TO RESCUE YOUR HEART
AS IF IT WERE A STRANGER**

α OWN NOTHING

Harassed by dense visions / you return / to rescue your heart /
as if it were a stranger / when one vision after another /
and a shadow / cut out of shadow / remain unable to follow . . . //
— the sand under your footsteps //

I can't yet fathom / how we arrived / in the midst of gardens . . . /
— romantic / surrounded by dense fog in the forest /
on that narrow path / between trees / I step forward, thinking: / “Oh /
how good / that the car / in front of me / is guiding me with its . . . /
— lights!” / At that moment / I hadn't yet understood /
that it isn't a car / but, rather, an angel with two / red . . . //
— lanterns //

The *alpha* angels / guide errant souls this way /
(those who really / want to take . . . / — *their pilgrimage*) /
from planet *Earth* / on the way to the *Earth of* . . . //
— *Knowledge* //

If you have luck enough / and the courage / to set off as well . . . //
— then on this path you too / may one day / experience how . . . //
— Life / is waking up / in your body . . . //
— full of vitality . . . //

Yet before entering / the *Gate* / of *First Heaven* /
I took one last glance / at planet Earth /
It seemed to me a bit / like a model train set /
with landscape and houses / that my father and I /
in my (and his) childhood / side by side with such joy (!) / once . . . //
— conjured up ///

"...la parole seule suffit pour voir..."

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, III/4/23

7
OWN NOTHING
α

A WORD ALONE IS ENOUGH TO AWAKEN

A word alone is enough to awaken / but why is it not here? /
When you were born / everyone was silent / hidden behind clichés /
When you were born / people were mute / people were alone /
Trees were shouting / stars were shouting / mountains were shouting /
but from trains / from TVs / and from radios /
resounded only / bursting atmospheric waves /
When you were growing up / you were waiting / for someone to cry out /
but everyone was silent! /
You ran out into the landscape / and listened to the trees /
you tilted your ear / to the rustling of anthills /
you asked the roots / to narrate to you /
but did not understand them . . . /
But today / on the face of stars / the time has come /
Eyes want to open / and a Word alone wants to speak out /
a Word alone, enough to awaken . . . //

— is here ///



β

RUN NOT FROM YOUR OWN PAIN

THE PLOT OF THE PREVIOUS PART:

As previously mentioned, the Pilgrim's mother was emotionally remote and his father was not able to make up for her lack of influence; when he was a one-year-old boy, a fall on a broken shard of china blinded him in his left eye. After a conflict with his mother, he left home and emerged at the gateway to a fantasy world, where fiction merges with reality.

"...mais que la porte s'ouvre enfin comme la première page d'un livre..."

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, V/9/1

1

BUT LET THE DOOR FINALLY BURST OPEN LIKE THE FIRST PAGE OF A BOOK

β RUN NOT FROM YOUR OWN PAIN

But let the door / finally burst open / like the first page of a . . . //
— book / when I enter *First Heaven*, full of . . . //
— adventure! / The first page of a new book /
its contents / have been here for a long time! . . . /
The landscape so unfamiliar (!) /
yet I have a feeling / that . . . / a long time ago . . . //
— *this* was my home! //

Cruising through new / landscapes . . . / — full of loose soil /
My car softly booming / as the wheels turn / round my . . . / tiny . . . //
— personal . . . / — history! / All around is black earth *chernozem* . . . //
— soaked through with water / And because the Earth / we grew from . . . //
— lies / but one level beneath us / it oozes towards that . . . //
— landscape where I . . . //
— attune myself with its . . . / — invisible . . . //
— roots . . . / Between them, weaving my way / totally alone . . . //
— *unrooted* / and *Alpha* angels / light my way with their . . . //
— red . . . //
— lanterns . . . //

Alpha angels / are the first true guardians of the path / of us *Pilgrims* /
to *Seventh Heaven* / guardians of blooming *Amber Ways* / subsumed by . . . //
— devils from left and right / Devils are cruel beings / who've lost their . . . //
— way / and since then do not / like to / permit access to the path . . . //
— to anyone else ///

“...la pluie échevelée lézarde nos conversations nos fortifications
de poitrines...”

T. Tzara, L’Homme approximatif, XI/8/1

2

DISHEVELLED RAIN

BREAKS INTO OUR CONVERSATION

SOAKING OUR CHEST-FORTIFICATIONS

Dishevelled rain / breaks into our conversation /
soaking our chest-fortifications / I resume conversation with the “Alphas” /
who tell me that / it bothers them / that the devils sent /
their spies / into our ranks / It is said they are wolves /
in sheep’s clothing / who’ve already consumed many with their . . . //
— tongue //

While I view / all these blooming . . . / — angelic beings /
they suddenly seem / too monotonous / for me /
Each of them shooting out / wings . . . / between shoulder blades /
each of them assuming a face as if . . . / — crooning a prayer /
each of them presuming to . . . /
— help somehow / but not one of them / is a . . . //
— poet //

β

And so, I decide / to find someone / one of a kind /
So, I find / a drop-dead gorgeous angel / named *Viera Beta* /
Viera is / utterly unique / for she wears a red scarf /
tight around her body / and unlike / *Alpha* angels . . . //
— she’s . . . //
— a woman . . . //

Viera Beta agrees / to fly / near my . . . / — car /
She often brushed it / with her feet / flipping herself open to me /
like an adventure book / (or at least so it seemed) /
In the pages of that book / I looked . . . / — mirror-like /
And saw / pictures in it / cooking with . . . / — crimson flame /
fired . . . / by my own . . . / incandescent . . . //
— arteries . . . ///

"...dans chaque feuille il y aurait le tronc de l'arbre sans le savoir..."

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, VII/6/15

3

IN EVERY LEAF OF A TREE IS ITS TRUNK WITHOUT KNOWING IT

In every leaf of a tree is its trunk / without knowing it . . . /
If only they were / aflow / with their existence . . . //
— those blackbirds in the . . . //
— branches! / Maybe they would open and sing for us more . . . //
— intelligibly . . . / . . . but unfortunately, we . . . //
— didn't notice / in the midst of such beauty / we slowly . . . //
— left our . . . //
— footprints . . . //

At that time my son / woke up sometimes / We walked together /
under the crowns of trees / and *over* their . . . / — roots /
We had a Secret Earth / and named it . . . / — *Filip* /
And *Second Heaven* / arched over us /
and the Earth was the *ground floor* /
and we / did not live anywhere /
other than on the . . . //
— *floor above it* //

From those times I remember only: /
— *three* question marks in our . . . /
— eyes / and *four* hot . . . /
— palms filled with . . . //

— hope ///

β RUN NOT FROM YOUR OWN PAIN

"...dans chaque feuille il y aurait une autre feuille..."

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, VII/6/14 (15)

IN EVERY LEAF ANOTHER LEAF

In every leaf another leaf / and in every leaf /
the trunk of the tree / without knowing it /
and in every path / another path in our . . . / — dream . . . /
better than the . . . / — previous one / and above all that . . . /
— blackbirds singing / as we were wandering /
through muddy fields / to *Seventh Heaven* /
mountains on the right and left / swarming with demons /
and all around us / *Alpha* angels . . . //

— *Jacks-of-All-Trades* //

It was, I think / the night after Christmas Eve / and I still could see /
Viera Beta and I / moving / through dark spaces /
Truly I had no idea / that at 1 a.m. / it was possible to hear /
blackbirds starting / their song / choking with it like . . . /
— crazy . . . / They thought, poor things / that the red lanterns near . . . /
— signalled daylight / and so they sung . . . / In reality . . . /
— there was *no* day / . . . in reality / we were in the midst of a . . . //

— *Dark Night of the Soul* //

Since then / wherever I drove / (strange thing!) /
I saw on plains in . . . / — *First Heaven* /
ladybirds with burnt . . . / — wings / "For God's sake!" I thought /
"Who has that / on their conscience!?" / With that mystery . . . /
— unsolved / we continued on our way / to *Second Heaven* . . . /
— my son Filip and I / both still . . . /
— half awake and . . . //

— immersed in dreams ///

"...la couronne de l'arbre se verrait dans la feuille..."

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, VII/6/13 (14, 15)

THE CROWN OF THE TREE IS VISIBLE IN THE LEAF

The crown of the tree is visible in the leaf /
and in every leaf another leaf / and in every leaf /
the trunk of the tree / without knowing it //

The *Alpha Angels* / did not like / *Viera Beta* /
They suspected her / of various things / and she in turn /
burst all about with / — explosions of laughter . . . / — full of contempt /
and glared at them through . . . / — fingers / In that atmosphere /
we were suffocating . . . / myself and the child I bear . . . //
— inside //

Those acidities / that I experienced / on the way to *Second Heaven!* /
On that way / serpentine through / muddy earth / impossible to take . . . /
— root in . . . / I experienced / the body of *Viera Beta* /
no matter how beautifully / tight in her red scarf /
it could not compensate for . . . / — understanding /
although . . . / (considering it) / in reality / it was I myself /
who decided to wedge . . . //
— open the door to this . . . //
— experience //

I let her in / trusting her to . . . //
— transform me . . . //

We are not aware / of what is mirrored in us! / In every leaf /
another leaf / and in the leaf the trunk of the tree / and the trunk /
borne by ground water through a / — stream / And so we too / acted /
without seeing . . . / — hidden reasons . . . / but now . . . /
I really don't remember . . . / which—of the two of us— //
. . . who . . . //

— left whom . . . ///

“...des jardins de femmes aux jolies omoplastes reposant
dans leur langueur de nénuphars...”

T. Tzara, L’Homme approximatif, III/4/19

6

GARDENS OF WOMEN WITH GORGEOUS SHOULDER BLADES REPOSE IN THEIR WATERLILLY LANGOUR

Gardens of women with gorgeous shoulder blades / repose /
in their waterlily languor / where flames of flowers /
at first so hopeful / *shoulder bladeficious* / up and down /
simply will not shine / *Kundalini* / failing to . . . /
— alight . . . / in our spines . . . / Such are the images /
that in my memory / I bear now . . . / . . . whenever I remember /
my way through . . . //
— *First Heaven* //

The truth is / that all angels / here have / exceedingly long hair /
that / in lakes / they bathe with waterlilies / the truth is also /
that these are not lakes / but swamps . . . / — stinking sewers /
fruit of the languor / of six *Heavens* above / and we /
often / stained up to the waist . . . //
— lethargically . . . //
— wallowed in them . . . //

If I were not a poet / but a worker / in urban sewage /
I would use the word “shit” / but I only say /
that I simply / did not wish to see / for wish is . . . //
— father to . . . //
— thought //

These places vainly and in vain / promise something /
That is / (it’s plain to me) / between those marshes /
towards the end of my journey / racing through *First Heaven* /
I came to read / for my eyes / splayed open /
when I finally / stopped escaping my . . . //

— pain ///

β RUN NOT FROM YOUR OWN PAIN

“...la parole seule suffit pour voir...”

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, III/4/23

A WORD ALONE IS ENOUGH TO AWAKEN

A word alone is enough to awaken! / Why try / to elude . . . //
— knowledge?! / Might it be prudent (?) / to tune ears . . . //
— to hope (?) / hewn by words (?) / and in turn . . . //
— cure / your own soul / of all its . . . //
— disillusionment? //

Still, just before entering / the *Gate* / to *Second Heaven* /
I looked upon / the *Heaven* beneath it /
I saw there *Viera Beta* / and in her hand /
a large magnifying glass / and so I realized /
who on the way / through *First Heaven* /
had burnt the wings / of those little ladybirds! /
That matter / to which / I was blind /
for I simply did not want to . . . //
— see . . . //

. . . but today / on the face of stars / the time fulfilled /
eyes opened / and a Word spoken /
able to cure / the souls of all . . . //

— wounded creatures ///



Y

FREEDOM'S WORTH IT

THE PLOT OF THE PREVIOUS PART:

After a conflict with his mother, the Pilgrim left his home and found himself at the gate of the mythical world of Seven Heavens and drove into the First of them. From his relationship with an angel in the form of a woman named Viera Beta he was guided by the fact that he had opened his eyes to true reality.

“...lorsque j’ouvre le tiroir de ta voix fraîche sans nom...”

T. Tzara, L’Homme approximatif, V/3/20

1

WHEN I OPEN THE DRAWER TO YOUR FRESH NAMELESS VOICE

FREEDOM’S WORTH IT

Y

When I open the drawer / to *Your Fresh Nameless Voice* /
it’s not so important / what the *Voice* is telling me . . . /
What’s important is / that *He* emerges . . . / — from inside my body . . . /
telling me that *I* am *myself* / and vice-versa: / that . . . /
— *myself* is *I* . . . / telling me not to hesitate / and only to *love* . . . /
But *where* (?) / does the *Voice* come from? / *Who* is *He*? /
And *how* is it possible / *He* knows *all* the . . . //
— answers? //

Ever since then / the *Voice* has been with me / wherever I go /
He was wherever I was / and always . . . //
— advised me / until one time / when I . . . //
— disobeyed . . . / until the moment / when once I . . . //
— had betrayed *Him* . . . //

And *Second Heaven* smells / of rosemary, ginger, ginseng, and . . . /
— horny goat weed / And *Second Heaven* drowns / in orange colours /
And *Alpha* angels / our trusty guides /
meanwhile warm themselves in the . . . /
— sun / and the sun draws / amidst the trees, all . . . //
— shapes of . . . //

— sensuality . . . ///

"...sauvage espoir projeté avec les boomerangs et les comètes..."

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, X/5/10

2

WILD HOPE HURLED

WITH BOOMERANGS AND COMETS

... Wild hope / hurled with boomerangs and comets ... /
... Entrance into *Second Heaven* / as if into an orange vagina ... /
... Mad joyride / in the middle of it all / towards another adventure ... /
... And from both sides ... / — devils attacking ... /
... On that narrow path / to *stop* ... /
... would truly mean ... /
— disaster! //

At that time, I met an angel ... / — *Petrana Gamma* /
and in conversation with her / got the feeling /
it's *she* who knows all the ... / — secrets /
and that (if I approached *her*) /
perhaps she would ... //
— reveal them to me //

But the *Voice* insisted / that none of this was ... /
— true / insisted it wasn't good / for me to remain so ... /
— susceptible, so open / but *she* seemed ... /
— immaculate to me / and suddenly it seemed ... /
— certain that only with *her* / might I discover new ... /
— constellations / and so I ... /
— disobeyed the *Voice* / and ... /
— let *her* speak ... //

— deep into my ears ///

FREEDOM'S WORTH IT

Y

"...et les chats dans les bras deviennent de petites locomotives..."

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, V/8/9

AND THE KITTENS ON YOUR LAP TURN INTO TINY TRAINS

And the kittens on your lap / turn into tiny trains /
was the dream / that I dreamed / when we first /
fell asleep / with *Petrana Gamma* / on the orange plains of . . . //
— *Second Heaven* //

≈≈≈≈

≈DREAM≈ 2

≈≈≈≈≈

I had in my arms / a cat with two . . . / — heads /

One of them belonged to a . . . / — small kitten / but the second matured . . . /
— too soon / and once after a sleepless night / the second one packed /
all the luggage of the first / and sent it . . . / — packing . . . /
Since then / it's full of emptiness it's been. . . / — seeking . . . /
— fulfillment //

It became a cat / unable to be . . . / — stroked //

And that kitten / on my lap / turned into / a tiny train /
a tiny train that / swept more and more things / into that black hole /
in its inner . . . / — empty constellation / a small sad pussycat /
unable to satisfy / its longing . . . to / — fulfill itself /
I look in my lap / but the kitten is no longer there /
It's standing before me / with professor-like . . . //
— glasses //

≈≈≈≈

≈≈≈≈≈

≈≈≈≈≈

That dream I dreamt / the first time /
we fell asleep / with *Petrana Gamma* /
in *Second Heaven*, in an . . . //

— orange bed . . . ///

“...l'indicible théorie des vocabulaires et des thorax...”

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, XI/4/10

4

UNSPEAKABLE THEORY OF VOCABULARY AND RIB CAGES

4

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... Unspeakable theory of vocabulary and rib cages ... /
... manifold traps of tongue with asthmatic philosophizing ... /
... helpless violence in communication with the ... / — help of arguments ... /
... pieced all together / that played a role / when we stopped in the midst of ... /
— orange fields / me, Filip, and the *Alpha* angels ... /
— we, petty pollen grains / that forgot ... /
— where they actually / wanted ... //— to land //

I don't know, was it ... / — twenty years or ... / — twenty moments /
All I know is, that one day / rosemary, ginger, ginseng, and ... /
horny goat weed / I dug them out with a spade / to replace them, to build a ... /
— house / to live in it with *Petrana Gamma* ... /
— and I also know / that Filip was ... //— her son //

(I do not know how to explain it / actually / Filip was /
with me long before / he was born to *Petrana* /
Maybe, it's due to time shifts / but I know / once /
when assembling trains / with my father / Filip was /
hidden in me / somewhere ... //— inside) //

At that time the *Voice* had already stopped ... / — speaking to me ... /
but the one who ... / did not cease talking ... / was ... /
— *Petrana Gamma* ... / One day / she kindly spoke with the ... /
— *Alpha* angels / And told them / that they're “cool guys” / and since then /
they stopped talking with ... / — me ... / — spoke only with her ... /
And this marked for me / the end of one ... //— “angelic age” ... / the beginning of ... //— “an age of ... //— solitude” ///

“...étendre sur un lit le blanc espoir d’une mort prochaine...”

T. Tzara, L’Homme approximatif, III/4/24

5

PUT TO SLEEP THE WHITE HOPE OF NEAR DEATH

FREEDOM’S WORTH IT

Put to sleep / the white hope . . . //

— of near death . . . //

~~~~ // ≈DREAM≈ 3 // ~~~~~

Dark night / sleeping and not sleeping / on the wall above the / — bed /  
slowly spins a / quiet . . . / white . . . / — *virgin-bride* / that *virgin-bride* /  
who violently whispers: / — “You viper . . . / — my husband!” /  
and *Melusina* / in the form of a wailing wind / sings about . . . / — death /  
to disclose all / hidden . . . / — secrets . . . //

Y

Death laid itself to sleep / in that horrifying night / while they slept /  
my eyes / raced from the room / away from the spectre on the wall /  
and I found myself in a . . . / — room behind mirrors //

Behind those mirrors / lurked a small boy . . . / — five years old /  
on his side / lay a girl with him . . . / — suitcases packed /  
I raced back to my bed / to lie in it . . . //

— white hope of . . . / — near death . . . //

In the bed / lay a woman under a . . . / — white cover /  
— who had the face of my . . . / — mother / Put to sleep /  
the white hope of . . . / — near death . . . //

And suddenly I understood it all: / I am not *i* / that *five-year-old boy* is not . . . /  
— *me* / and *mother* is not *mother* / and that *virgin-bride* / that *virgin* on the wall /  
who has a face like . . . / — *Petrana Gamma* . . . even / — *she* is not *she!* //

~~~~ // ~~~~~ // ~~~~~

At that moment I woke up / glimpsed a door in the wall /
seized the handle / and stepped out into . . . //

— freedom ///

"...le jugement dernier surgit sur des ailes vitreuses dans notre agitation..."

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, XI/4/3

6

THE LAST JUDGEMENT LEAPS OUT ON GLASSY WINGS OF OUR UPRISING

FREEDOM'S WORTH IT

The Last Judgement leaps out / on glassy wings /
of our uprising / spreading its wings /
crystalline wings / rising, rising . . . / — *Landscape* /
— *Landscape of the Last Judgement* /
— *Landscape of Many Trees* /
— *Landscape of the Truth* /
that so much / reminds me of . . . //
— *Home* //

Y

Home has . . . / crystalline wings / *Home* is . . . //
— flying . . . / — back and forth / the *Home* we bear / wherever . . . //
— the two of us go / me and my son . . . //
— *Filip* //

The scent of rosemary, ginger / ginseng, and horny goat weed /
all the scents / came back / when I finally understood /
that freedom is . . . //
— worth it //

And *Petrana Gamma* reproached me: /
"I let you in / because I believed /
you would fulfill me / but you are / merely a boy /
with a shard of china . . . / — in your face!" /
And *Petrana Gamma* packed my luggage /
and sent me . . . //

— packing . . . ///

"...la parole seule suffit pour voir..."

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, III/4/23

7

A WORD ALONE IS ENOUGH TO AWAKEN

FREEDOM'S WORTH IT

A word alone is enough to awaken / or at least . . . / it could . . . /

— be so . . . / But there are moments / when it / really . . . /

— isn't! / Moments, when words get loaded . . . /

— with fog / sometimes they even / lead us to the edge of cliffs, to . . . /

— cliffs that prevent us / from clearly seeing / our . . . //

— horizons //

But today / on the face of stars / time has been fulfilled /

my wounded eye of rock cliffs / wants to open again /

and a Word wants to speak /

Y

that Word wants to tell me: //

— "Freedom is worth it!" //

Before entering / the *Gate* / to *Third Heaven* /

I peer back one last time / at the *Heaven* below it /

Alpha angels gathered / in the house /

I . . . / (with such effort!) / . . . had built /

and *Petrana Gamma* amongst them / playing /

with her spectacles / as if with two . . . //

— magnifying glasses ///



δ

NOT TO CLAIM ANY POSITION

THE PLOT OF THE PREVIOUS PART:

After a conflict with his mother and a transfer to the mythical world of Seven Heavens the Pilgrim travelled through the first two of them. In both he experienced a relationship with an angel in the form of a woman. The first one was rather episodic, but the second stopped him (in spite of the warning of his inner Voice) for as long as twenty years. Only with great sacrifice was it possible to continue on his pilgrimage . . .

"...écho de formes parallèles le sentier des voix se perd..."

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, VII/6/24

1

AN ECHO OF PARALLEL FORMS, THE TRAIL OF VOICES FADES AWAY

NOT TO CLAIM ANY POSITION

1

An echo of parallel forms / the trail of voices fades away . . . //

At Christmas precisely / I went through the *Gate* /
to *Third Heaven* / with the little that remained to me /
after a great battle / for my . . . / — bare Life /
with only my Ford Mondeo / on its backseat /
my son was still sleeping / encircled by / several angels . . . //

- (the rest stayed . . . //
- in *Second Heaven* . . . //
- in the house . . . //
- that I had built) //

8

Oh, how to defend / a handful of *Pilgrims* /
from an army of devils (?) / who encircle . . . //

- our path . . .?! //

Oh, how to defend against . . . //

- the *voodoo* pitfalls / and pins jabbed . . . //
- deep under the skin . . . / when we still hadn't . . . //
- unveiled . . . //
- *who we are!*? //

Are we only / echoes of form . . . / . . . parallel forms? /
Are we only / trails of voices / fading away . . . //

- between fields? //

Oh, to step . . . //

- out of my silhouette . . . //
- that was the reason . . . //
- for my arrival . . . //

— at *Third Heaven* ///

"...alléchants mystères signes de mort la mort parmi nous..."

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, III/3/5

ALLURING MYSTERIES, SIGNS OF DEATH, DEATH AMONG US

Alluring mysteries, signs of death . . . //

— death among us / slumber here in . . . //

— dense forests . . . / All that is not real / comes to . . . //

— perish here . . . / For it will appear / what we really / may . . . //

— be capable of / Yellow daffodils / are drowning in jealousy / and paths . . . //

— near *Bull Rock Cave* / enticing *Pilgrims* / to climb . . . //

— free solo / All so that . . . //

— graves can be filled . . . //

— down in the cave . . . //

— with human sacrifice . . . //

— so that the *dead* . . . //

— will be *dead* . . . //

— all so that the *living* can . . . //

— *live* . . . //

And in all that yellow daily light / to remind us that we are . . . /

— standing at a . . . / — crossroad / and each of us must decide /
whether . . . / to go . . . / — down to the cave / or . . . //

— up the slopes . . . //

— to grow together with . . . / — trees //

That is the way . . . / — here in *Third Heaven* / Either you connect with . . . //

— nutrients / putrefying in the earth / or you lay down . . . //

— among them / to become, like them . . . //

— rotten //

That earth is a crossroad / full of signs / and wrath, fear, guilt /

and selfishness / flow here in brooks / to disappear /

in underground streams / While wise trees / mightily /

leap to the sky . . . / firmly anchored in the earth / knowing that . . . //

— they simply . . . //

— exist! ///

“...haut les mains! pour accueillir l’ange qui va tomber...”

T. Tzara, L’Homme approximatif, II/2/1

3

**HANDS UP!
TO WELCOME THE ANGEL
WHO WILL SOON FALL**

NOT TO CLAIM ANY POSITION

“Hands up! / to welcome the angel /
who will soon fall” / resounds in a narrow valley /
through which a path winds to . . . / — *Fourth Heaven* /
When in this valley / the Sun throws its rays /
it inflames / with flowers of mustard and rapeseed /
but when it sets / behind steepest slopes /
its surface swarms / with fallen angels /
or with those / who are / about to . . . //
— fall //

“So, hands up! / to defend ourselves / against aerial attacks . . . //
— from other realms!” //

6

The engine of the Ford Mondeo / growls through muddy soil /
mixed with stone / Those *Alpha* angels / that remained with us /
are very tired / when at twilight / something apparently . . . //
— begins to happen! //

Evening settles / and we stop / Here, we will camp / here at . . . /
— *Bull Rock* / *Celestial Guardians* / stretch their hands up /
while settling into place / on the surrounding slopes with . . . / — torches /
In the valley no one shall . . . / — enter! / But they have no idea /
that the angel *Sarra Delta* /
is already / long here . . . //

— inside! ///

“...tant de sanguines attractions nous ont apparentés aux charnelles maçonneries...”

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, III/6/26

4

SO MANY SANGUINE ATTRACTIONS LURED US TO THE CARNAL MASONRY

So many sanguine attractions lured us /
to the carnal masonry / masonry behind which it is . . . //
— impossible to see! //

At this place / encircled with torches /
(no one can go / out or in) / I encountered /
my . . . / — inner flame / Which came as an encore /
in the form of *Kundalini* / that surprisingly flared /
up my spine / and a moment later / when it had burned out /
(and even before I managed to . . . / — recover) /
an angel / named *Sarra Delta* /
— appeared in *its* place . . . //

δ

If you asked me / how she garnered so much of my / radiant affection /
perhaps I would not know . . . / — what to say / For all information /
remained hidden / — behind the carnal masonry / somewhere . . . /
— inside . . . / She strew flowers / on the graves of her close ones . . . /
— who all had died . . . / — in the cave / Near such weight of death . . . /
— more than ever . . . she / — shone with freshness / with her thick . . . /
— dark hair / and strong will to realize . . . / — all that comes to mind . . . /
But when I think about it / now . . . /
the real reason . . . /
I was with *her* . . . /
was that I longed . . . /
to learn again . . . /
how not to fear . . . //

— making mistakes ///

NOT TO CLAIM ANY POSITION

"...malgré le cri épais de la bête condamnée à mort..."

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, III/5/3

DESPITE THE DARK SCREAMS OF A BEAST DOOMED TO DIE

Despite the dark screams of a *Beast* . . . / — doomed to die / we can . . . //
 — remain here / Blessed are . . . / — complex dreams / that we dreamt to . . . //
 — transcend . . . / — all of our . . . / — *loves-nonloves* //

≈≈≈≈ // ≈DREAM≈ 4 // ≈≈≈≈≈≈

In the dream, we were three: / *Sarra Delta* / and I /
 and amidst us the *shadow* of . . . / — *Our Images* . . . / — *shadow* . . . //
 — *Veil on eyes* . . . / — *shadow* . . . / clouding us . . . //
 — who was *she*. . . //
 — and who was—I //

"Burn down you *Veil / on eyes!* / Go from the underground /
Dog in the manger! / Step from us / *Fallen Angel!* / And return to us the . . . /
 — carefree ways of *little children:* //
 — the freedom to make . . . //
 — *mistakes!!!*" //

At that moment / *Abysses* opened / with a scream / of *Pure Terror* /
 From the dark sky . . . / — stones rained / From the *Beasts'* gorge . . . /
 — scorpions exploded out / Debris flew / right next to my . . . /
 — head / And if we / (one way or another) / hadn't truly . . . /
 — loved / we would have caved / forever . . . //
 — into *Nothingness* . . . //

≈≈≈≈ // ≈≈≈≈≈ // ≈≈≈≈≈≈

While we were in deep sleep . . . / — rocks burst / revealing boulders . . . /
 — scattered throughout the valley / Everyone and everything was . . . /
 — dead / All that remained . . . / — intact / was myself / with Filip . . . /
 — in my arms / and *Sarra Delta* / who hid herself . . . //
 — between the shadows . . . //

— near *Bull Rock Cave* . . . ///

“...le crépuscule enlève les adieux à l’horizon lavé de froide
clarté de stéréoscope...”

T. Tzara, L’Homme approximatif, XII/3/2

6

TWILIGHT STRIPS AWAY FAREWELLS TO THE HORIZON AWASH IN THE COLD CLARITY OF A STEREOSCOPE

NOT TO CLAIM ANY POSITION

8

Twilight strips away farewells to the horizon /
awash in the cold clarity of a stereoscope /
Yes, it is more and more clear / as I am approaching /
through the gorge . . . / — up to *Fourth Heaven*: / *Sarra Delta* /
has absolutely / . . . no intention . . . / . . . of seeing me . . . //
— before she disappears . . . //
— forever //

She buried my picture / at *Bull Rock Cave* /
and at times / she carried to it an . . . /
— armful of flowers / But I, in reality . . . /
— am someone other / than that picture . . . /
— in her hands / I am not *there* . . . / I am *here* (!) /
treading through the gorge to . . . / — *Fourth Heaven* /
leaving behind a mess of stone . . . / — tombstones /
leaving behind boulders / that buried nearly . . . /
— everything: / My *guardian angels* / left me / my car, my . . . /
— Ford Mondeo / and all my . . . //
— *stray dreams* . . . //

I wanted to bring *Sarra Delta* / with me / to *Fourth Heaven* . . . /
Searching for her . . . / — again and again / before I stepped through that . . . //
— narrow passage / into another *dimension* / but she hid herself . . . //
— between rows of graves / I searched for her / with the cold clarity . . . //
— of a stereoscope / But she probably / dreaded to experience . . . //
— how the earth is / full of scorpions / I wanted to say farewell . . . //
— and say / my goodbyes / for the last time, I wanted . . . //
— to wave . . . / but . . . //
— there was no one to wave to ///

"...la parole seule suffit pour voir..."

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, III/4/23

7
NOT TO CLAIM ANY POSITION
8

A WORD ALONE IS ENOUGH TO AWAKEN

A word alone is enough to awaken / but only for some! /
To others, the Word is . . . / — dangerous (!) /
implying that the world will change /
in ways other than those they like /
marking the danger of ruining / their . . . //
— false foolish notions //

But today / on the face of stars / the time has come /
Eyes want to open / and the Word wants to speak /
that Word reprimanding me / to learn my lesson //
and not claim / any position / . . . that . . . //
— I am not destined . . . //
— to live! //

Even before entering / the *Gate* / to *Fourth Heaven* /
I took one last look / at the *Heaven* beneath /
but no matter how hard / I searched /
with my stereoscope / this time I . . . //
— did not see . . . //

— anything at all ///



ε

LISTEN TO THE VOICE OF YOUR BODY

THE PLOT OF THE PREVIOUS PART:

In his effort to relieve himself of the influence of his original family roots, the Pilgrim entered into the mythical world of Seven Heavens. In each of the three Heavens that he had already visited, he experienced a relationship with an angel in the form of a woman. In the last one, the Third one, it was Sarra Delta, a mysterious figure related to death and many catastrophes . . .

"...je me souviens d'une déception sinieuse tirant du passé son
amère substance..."

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, VIII/1/1

1

RECALLING A TORTUOUS DISAPPOINTMENT, THAT WRENCHED FROM THE PAST ITS BITTER SUBSTANCE

ε LISTEN TO THE VOICE OF YOUR BODY

Recalling / a tortuous disappointment / that wrenched from the past /
its . . . / — bitter substance / I recall my path through . . . /
— *Fourth Heaven* / its meadows / brimming with birches; / I recall . . . /
— rosy flowers / in deep green / bathing in the warmth of golden . . . /
— *sun-vertigos* . . . / But what I most / recall . . . /
— are springs / forming peepholes back / into the past to . . . //
— *Third Heaven* //

Through those springs / I peered incessantly / to find /
traces of *Sarra Delta* / but the whole earth / one level beneath . . . /
seemed to me . . . / hopelessly . . . //
— shrouded in desolation //

At that moment I noticed / that all the birches /
here in *Fourth Heaven* / were inscribed with . . . / — poems /
on pure white bark / verses shimmered / in golden . . . //
— letters . . . //

Something else / astounded me / even more: /
Gazing about / in all directions / I couldn't see any . . . /
— devils / Saw no one planning to foil / my path through the . . . /
— birch woods to . . . / — *Seventh Heaven* / Saw no feet /
smudging . . . / — carpets of green grass / Only rosy flowers /
whispering sentences from the . . . / — birch bark . . . /
But the rosiest one / of all the flowers / was the angel . . . //
— *Liudi Mila Epsilon* / her skin the colour of . . . //
— peeled almonds / with two pinions in the . . . //
— shape of a lyre / her hair coiled like . . . //
— ripe grain / coming to rest / somewhere . . . //
— down near her . . . //
— divine ass ///

“...errant avec des labyrinthes attachés à l’ombre de mes pas...”

T. Tzara, L’Homme approximatif, VI/7/4

WANDERING WITH LABYRINTHS

CHAINED TO THE SHADOW OF MY STEPS

Wandering with labyrinths / chained to the shadow of my steps /
 blind to the verses / oblivious to the ... / — pink flowers /
 I waded through green grass / to discover one / and yet another ... //
 — spring ... //
 — window into a past world ... //
 — a window behind which I was looking ... //
 — for *Sarra Delta* //

Every ten steps / I met *Liudi Mila* / but was in / no mood ... /
 — for her / In her hand she clutched ... / — angelic quills / ripped from /
 her own pinions / For she was the ... / — author of the poems ... /
 — on the birch bark! / Verse written with ... / — sunbeams in ... //
 — golden letters! //

Realizing that / I started to read the verses /
 on the birch bark / and ... //

... did not find them ... / — exceptional / but thought / it better /
 (than having my head ... / — full of *Sarra Delta*) / to add to every poem /
 some ... / — lines of my own / and before one day / traded places /
 with the next / we sat in the grass / passionately ... //
 — discussing ... //
 — poetry ... //

Liudi Mila Epsilon told me / that she dislikes /
 attaching herself to anyone / that she abhors / any ... /
 — bonds of love ... / And so / I thought /
 maybe / maybe this ... / — is what ... //
 — true friendship ... //

— looks like after all ///

“...sur des draps souillés par des crépuscules attardés
des vers fiévreux sous la braise...”

T. Tzara, L’Homme approximatif, VIII/1/6–7

3

**ON BED SHEETS STAINED
BY LINGERING TWILIGHT
FEVERISH VERSES GLIMMER IN THE COAL**

3
ε LISTEN TO THE VOICE OF YOUR BODY
ε

On bed sheets stained by lingering twilight / feverish verses /
glimmer in the coal . . . / — burning quietly / Those doves . . . /
— glowing with heat / were looking for solid earth / far away from . . . /
— *Sarra Delta* / . . . but always . . . / alas . . . / — returned again /
for they did not find / any place to . . . / — latch onto with their claws . . . /
In reality / it was I alone / who was still circling / around mystic . . . /
— magic crystal balls / around those . . . / — crystalline springs . . . /
— and peered through them / with my stereoscope back at . . . /
— *Third Heaven* / Things were like this: / I was circling . . . /
— around those springs . . . / and *Liudi Mila Epsilon* . . . //
— around me //

I understood / what was desired from me / but my recollections /
still bound me / to *Third Heaven* / to *Bull Rock* . . . to . . . //
— *Sarra Delta* / With one ear I heard . . . //
— the ringing of / my own heart . . . / — and with the other //
— *Liudi Mila* / and her . . . / — “Apotheosis” / of life in . . . //
— *brief flirtations* . . . //

One day I / found professor-like glasses / on the ground /
(just like / those worn by . . . / — *Petrana* / from *Second Heaven*) /
“How did these get here?” / I thought / and then . . . /
(with glasses on my nose) / saw better . . . / — through a peephole . . . /
— into *Third Heaven* / as if in the shadow of graves . . . //
— *Sarra Delta* / kissing . . . //
— another *Pilgrim* //

So why / (for the love of *Heaven!*) / shouldn’t I also try (?) /
with *Liudi Mila Epsilon* / to grab such a . . . //
— *brief flirtation!?* ///

“...oreilles de radeaux que les insectes durcis à la lune mijotaient dans l'impuissance des rêveries...”

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, X/4/5-6

EAR-RAFTS, THAT MOON-HARDENED INSECTS SIMMERED IN THE FUTILITY OF DREAMS

Ear-rafts / that moon-hardened insects / simmered in the futility of dreams . . . /
 So absurdly / appears the *friendship* / of two creatures: / *AngeLady* . . . //
 — with a divine ass / and a *poet* . . . / — with legs wedged / somewhere . . . //
 — in the past //

Ear-rafts / that moon-hardened insects / simmered in the futility of dreams . . . /
 So absurdly / appears the *flirtation*: / of a *poet* with a . . . / — ringing heart /
 with an *AngeLady* with her pinions frozen / somewhere . . . /
 — between spaces / That night when we / approached one another /
 I dreamed . . . / — just such a dream: //

≈≈≈≈ / ≈DREAM≈ 5 / ≈≈≈≈≈≈

In that dream I strolled / around a castle in the clouds / a castle in the clouds /
 where *little princesses* / were hiding . . . / And because I was . . . /
 — curious / wanted to find out / how / those . . . / — *princesses* are /
 and so / with my . . . / — stereoscope / I spied upon . . . / — *one* of them //

That *little princess* / who forever fell silent in her . . . /
 — childhood-chamber / while the key to the door of . . . /
 — adulthood . . . / she refined into bracelets . . . / — on her wrists //

No one could leave / or enter / and messages / mined from that chamber /
 from which a . . . / — prince might come / for his *little princess* . . . /
 — waved to him while simultaneously . . . /
 — hiding herself . . . / — behind a glass door . . . //

≈≈≈≈ / ≈≈≈≈≈ / ≈≈≈≈≈≈

Such was my dream / that first night / we approached / one another . . . /
 — me and the angel . . . / — named . . . //

— *Liudi Mila Epsilon* ///

“...lorsque l’herbe rare gèle à ras de bord...”

T. Tzara, L’Homme approximatif, VII/1/1

WHEN A RARE HERB FREEZES TO ITS EDGE

When a rare herb / freezes to its edge / don’t bother kissing it /
 When a rare herb / freezes to its edge / don’t bother smelling it /
 When a rare herb / freezes to its edge / it is dangerous . . . //
 — to embrace it . . . //
 — with a naked body //

And precisely this . . . / — *speech of my body* . . . / — tried to warn me /
 when I caught a chill / on sunny meadows . . . //
 — in the birches / — in the green grasses / surrounded . . . //
 — by rosy verses / None of those things / could restore to me . . . //
 — heat fading / from my limbs . . . //
 — into the frozen arms of the . . . //
 — *little princess*—*Liudi Mila* //

Those chills and fevers / were the answer / to my *brief flirtation* /
 And while *Liudi Mila Epsilon* / combed her hair . . . / the colour of . . . //
 — grain / I came to realize / that my *brief flirtation* . . . //
 — was perhaps . . . //
 — *too long* //

To listen to *my body’s voice* . . . / — was a virtue /
 and my task . . . / — at that time . . . //
 — to be learned . . . //
 — at last! ///

“...où les étoiles volent d’une fleur à l’autre et sucent
le miel de leur printemps de plume...”

T. Tzara, L’Homme approximatif, V/7/11

WHERE STARS FLY FROM FLOWER TO FLOWER SUCKING HONEY FROM THEIR FEATHERY SPRING

Where stars fly from flower to flower / sucking honey /
from their feathery spring / there is nothing to . . . //
— dispute //

And so even before spring / soared through the landscape /
I parted / from my dear . . . / — *Liudi Mila Epsilon* /
And at the threshold of that . . . / — short spring / coldness . . . //
— completely pervaded me / I virtually ran . . . //
— to warm up / hefting a bag on my shoulders / for Filip . . . //
— who . . . / — fortunately . . . //
— slept deeply . . . //
— the whole time //

At the end of that valley / stood a *Turquoise Chariot* / with a full tank /
and a key . . . / — in the ignition . . . / How did it get there? /
. . . but actually . . . / Who cares? / Certainly /
we would reach / *Seventh Heaven* . . . //
— by car or . . . //
— on foot //

Even before entering / the *Turquoise Chariot* / at the *Gate* /
of *Fifth Heaven* / I looked for the last time /
at the *Heaven* under it / and saw (with surprise) /
that behind the birch trunks / devils had been . . . /
— hiding (all along)! / I searched / to find /
Liudi Mila Epsilon / but to my astonishment /
she was not amongst the birches . . . //
— She was flying around me . . . //
— again and again in . . . //

— vicious cycles! ///

"...la parole seule suffit pour voir..."

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, III/4/23

A WORD ALONE IS ENOUGH TO AWAKEN

A word alone is enough to awaken . . . //

- written, pronounced, in prose . . . or in . . . //
- verse / in books captured / or that . . . //
- remain . . . / — still unborn . . . / — still soaring . . . //
- somewhere in the . . . //
- atmosphere . . . //

I am listening to my own words . . . //

- as if they were written by . . . / — someone else / Listening . . . //
- to my own words / dictated to me / by angels / in the . . . //
- *Four Heavens* / — schoolmasters and schoolmistresses— / of how . . . //
- to find myself . . . / If you open yourself / you can also . . . //
- let the words . . . / resound . . . //
- in you . . . //

Once again / before entering / the *Gate* /

of *Fifth Heaven* / I looked / at the *Heaven* beneath /

and when I glanced at / all the / scribbled . . . / — birch bark /

I realized / that the path to true poetry . . . //

- leads another way / and that its verses . . . //
- to be learned . . . //

— must be lived ///



ζ

I DECIDE THINGS FOR MYSELF

THE PLOT OF THE PREVIOUS PART:

The Pilgrim arrived in the mythical world of Seven Heavens. In each of the four which he previously visited; he encountered an angel in the form of a woman. However, he found himself unable to get the angel of Third Heaven, Sarra Delta, out of his mind. The only thing that helped him was a flirtation with Liudi Mila Epsilon which, unfortunately, had consequences . . .

“...comme je suis — seul planté au centre de l’enclume horaire...”

T. Tzara, L’Homme approximatif, XII/6/3

1

AS I STOOD—ALONE, HAMMERED INTO THE CENTRE OF A CLOCK ANVIL

ζ I DECIDE THINGS FOR MYSELF

As I stood . . . / — alone, hammered into the . . . /
— centre of a clock anvil /
striking minutes / striking seconds /
of time when . . . / my inner *Voice* . . . //
— left me . . . //
— for good //

What a shame, not to share with *Him* / all the . . . / beauties of . . . //
— *Fifth Heaven* / what a pity, that we could not stroll together . . . //
— on pebbles / along the shore of a wild . . . blue . . . //
— sea / on pebbles that Demosthenes had . . . / walked upon . . . //
— when he decided . . . / to drown out . . . //
— wild waves . . . //
— with his voice //

With the *Turquoise Chariot* / I sweep down roads /
across light blue . . . / — spray / across . . . /
— salty air / glittering in . . . / — sunshine /
and above in . . . / — silver mists / *Liudi Mila* . . . //
— discreetly accompanies me . . . //

— from a distance ///

"...gagné au jeu des solstices dans la solitude la tête haute..."

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, XI/1/5

2

VICTORIOUS IN THE GAME OF SOLSTICES EARNING SOLITUDE, WITH HEAD HELD HIGH

I DECIDE THINGS FOR MYSELF

Victorious in the game of solstices / earning solitude . . . //
— with head held high / I invited *Liudi Mila* down from . . . //
— silver mists //

I wanted us to decide together / where we should . . . / — go /
I had a proposal: / Follow the way . . . / — of Demosthenes /
that is: / drown out the storming waves . . . //
— with music, with images, and . . . //
— verses / and with their . . . //
— recitation //

ζ

Liudi Mila gratefully / plucked from her pinions . . . //
— another quill / and to the delight of the onlooking . . . //
— laughing gulls / we prepared . . . //
— further performances . . . //
— of our jointly . . . //
— spectacular . . . //
— *Ego-mania* //

In these ways we / whiled away the time / on the blue coast /
of *Fifth Heaven* / we . . . / — two ex-lovers / wandering /
to a future friendship / on a pilgrimage / that was not . . . //
— without mutual . . . //

— complication! ///

"...les soucis que nous portons avec nous qui sont nos vêtements intérieurs..."

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, 1/5/2-3

THE FEARS WE CARRY INSIDE US WHICH FORM OUR SECRET UNDERCLOTHES

≈≈≈≈

≈DREAM≈ 6

≈≈≈≈≈≈

The fears we carry inside us / which form / our . . . //

— secret underclothes / spoke to me / when I was sleeping . . . //

— they spoke / deeply to me . . . / — for I shall not . . . //

— forget them //

Those fears / —underpants and long johns— / afraid / that my verse / could get lost . . . / — among the hills; / afraid / that all the women / in my life / only wished to . . . / — use me; / afraid that . . . //

— on my way . . . / — I would not reach my dreams . . . //

— but freeze / surrounded by . . . //

— my own . . . //

— poetry . . . //

I wanted to strip off / that underwear / for I realized / that it doesn't warm . . . / — but chills me / I wanted to find a volcano . . . / — full of scorching lava / wanted to bathe / totally naked in those . . . / — hot baths / and change / my behaviour / overburdened with . . . //

— fear of the future //

In that dream I came to know / that . . . / — when I woke up / everything would turn round / and open to a . . . / — totally new . . . / — hot . . . and yet . . . / — unknown . . . //

— reality! //

≈≈≈≈ // ≈≈≈≈≈ // ≈≈≈≈≈≈

///

“...bien que les branches aient insinué leur
cristalline nudité un peu partout glacé...”

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, V/8/15

4

ALTHOUGH BRANCHES HINTED AT A CRYSTALLINE NAKEDNESS, ICE GLEAMED EVERYWHERE

ζ I DECIDE THINGS FOR MYSELF

Although branches hinted / at a crystalline nakedness . . . /
— ice gleamed everywhere! / Even as my subconscious / told me /
over and over / in my sleep . . . / — to change / I was still freezing /
and every time / I approached / my partner / in the sphere . . . /
— of art . . . / — *Liudi Mila* / I felt / that the warmth . . . /
— I needed for my life . . . /
— could more readily be found . . . //
— elsewhere //

Recollecting / my *vivid dream* / of glowing volcanos . . . /
and for the first time / reminding myself / that when it came /
to *my* affairs / I would decide . . . /
— on *my own!* / And so / I fell . . . / — in love with . . . /
— *Witoslaw Zeta* / whose red-brown hair / flickered like . . . /
— flames / and whose hands . . . / — burned wildly (!) . . . /
— hands of a savage! / It was said / that all men / in the end . . . /
— get burnt by her hotness / but at that moment . . . /
— I was really cold / and so able / to walk barefoot . . . /
— towards such a . . . //
— lava flow //

I presented her with . . . / — forty of my poems / and on the seashore /
we collected figs / In blue waves / frolicking together /
and in the *Turquoise Chariot* / rode . . . / — to other . . . / — beaches /
On the way / we spoke of the sense of the Way / Because we were both /
exhausted by . . . / — lovers' constellations /
we made up a . . . / — grandiose game . . . //

— we called marriage ///

“...l'enfance des passions massée en débris
de cris ardents de craintes...”

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, XIII/5/8–9

A CHILDHOOD OF PASSIONS LEVELLED TO THE BURNING RUINS OF FEARFUL CRIES

A childhood of passions / levelled to . . . /
— the burning ruins of fearful cries / when *Liudi Mila* . . . /
— came to me / to agree upon / the next date of . . . /
— our . . . / common recitation of . . . / — verses /
Both women / peered / into one another's . . . /
— eyes in surprise / as each saw . . . //
— in her rival . . . //
— another herself . . . //
— reflected //

Both fighters / rose in spirals / — over the clouds /
until . . . / their light and dark hair / totally . . . /
— blended / and set off . . . / — explosive highlights /
So it goes / when fire and ice / determine to dance . . . //
— together! //

That afternoon / thunder roared / and lightning bolts flashed . . . //
— in the sky / That afternoon / thunder rumbled until . . . //
— dusk / and lightning bolts / lit the sky . . . //
— throughout the night / while for me on the ground . . . //
— figs turned bitter . . . //
— as I tossed and turned . . . //
— in a bed . . . //
— surrounded by a circle of . . . //

— loneliness ///

“...où le souvenir secoue le vent des victoires sur le deck...”

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, X/8/10

6

WHERE MEMORY STIRS

IN THE WINDS OF VICTORY ON THE DECKS

Where memory stirs in the winds of victory on the decks of . . . /
— ships . . . / — distant ships . . . / — ships which . . . / on that morning . . . /
— saw . . . / — terrible things / that even I . . . / cannot believe . . . /
— I saw! / On a white rock / lay the lifeless body . . . /
— of *Liudi Mila* (!) / and her hands / still clasped . . . /
— impulsively clutching / (even now, in death) /
ringlets of the dark hair of . . . / — *Witoslaw* /
ringlets of hair / that during their fierce battle . . . //
— *Liudi Mila* had . . . //
— ripped out of her rival's scalp . . . //
— by the root //

In that bloody morning / *Witoslaw* *Zeta* . . . / — descended from the sky /
descended from the sky / with the *Beaming* face of a . . . / — *Victor* . . . /
with the *Beaming* face . . . / — of a *Glorious Victor* / who came / to claim /
her . . . / — spoils / Including the right to / slay everyone /
who dared / approach / — me . . . / And because that morning /
my son *Filip* / (after a long sleep) . . . / finally woke up /
at that very moment / (struck by sudden enlightenment) /
I understood definitively / that there was no other way . . . /
but to bid . . . / *Witoslaw* *Zeta* . . . //
— good bye! //

Just before leaving / that bluish coast / of *Fifth Heaven* /
my eyes rested . . . / — for the very last time / on the land . . . /
— where we had lived / And I saw . . . /
— *Witoslaw* *Zeta* / and the many things . . . //
— for which . . . //
— I am grateful . . . //
— with all my heart!!! ///

7 I DECIDE THINGS FOR MYSELF

"...la parole seule suffit pour voir..."

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, III/4/23

7

A WORD ALONE IS ENOUGH TO AWAKEN

ζ I DECIDE THINGS FOR MYSELF

A word alone is enough to awaken / but the Word is not / only what is . . . /

— spoken / Words are also / images and tones . . . //

— but above all: //

— Words are . . . //

— *Deeds!* //

What else can I say? / The *Deeds* of all of us . . . /

— emerging from / the poetry of the past /

have revealed / our souls . . . / — entirely . . . //

— *by themselves!* //

And when I look back / on *Fifth Heaven* /

I think that / in the *Sixth* (for *Heaven's sake!*) /

others / can make / *their way* . . . //

— *on their own (!!!)* / but when it comes . . . //

— to *my lifework* / I will take on / *this whole sphere* . . . //

— just my shadow . . . //

— and *I* . . . //

— *alone!!!* ///



η+θ

I DECIDE WHO YOU ARE TO ME

THE PLOT OF THE PREVIOUS PART:

The Pilgrim arrived at the mythical world of Seven Heavens. In each of the previous five he visited he met an angel in the form of a woman. He was able to put the angel from Third Heaven, Sarra Delta, out of his mind only after encountering Liudi Mila Epsilon in Fourth Heaven. But in Fifth Heaven, a good-looking brunette named Witoslaw Zeta, who loved the Pilgrim, slayed Liudi Mila in battle. The Pilgrim, dreading possible further consequences of her jealousy, (grudgingly) leaves her and enters Sixth Heaven.

“...l'eau de la rivière a tant lavé son lit elle emporte
les doux fils des regards...”

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, I/3/4-5

THE RIVER FLOODS ITS BED SO WILDLY IT STRIPS AWAY SWEET THREADS OF DREAM

The river floods its bed so wildly / it strips away . . . //
— *sweet threads of dream* / *One of those threads* . . . //
— bears the name the *Past* / And the *second* . . . / — bears the name: //
— “Nothing-was-yet-understood” . . . //

The river floods its bed so wildly / it strips away . . . //
— *sweet threads of dream* / and those *dreams* / are heading toward . . . //
— “I-don't-see-them-anymore” . . . / and the *Past* bears / a bitter flavour . . . //
— and / (despite all my efforts) . . . //
— I cannot see the *Future* at all . . . //

The river floods its bed so wildly / it strips away . . . //
— *sweet threads of dream* / And one of those *threads* is my . . . //
— Filip / And the *second* . . . / — my *work* . . . / — *work*, that . . . //
— I have not yet / succeeded in . . . / — awakening . . . //

And Filip decides / to better understand / the human mind / and human . . . /
— emotions / and leaves / to the opposite end of the world /
in order to understand / this world . . . / — better . . . //

And my *work* / in the meantime / falls asleep in some nook of my . . . //
— head / claiming / that nobody can . . . //
— awaken it / It drifts somewhere / to the opposite end . . . //
— of my mind / and from there / transmits the message . . . //
— to leave it alone! //

And even though the most / beautiful quality / of *Sixth Heaven* / is that . . . /
everything is perfectly visible . . . / from everywhere / (horizons with . . . /
— gorgeous vineyards (!) / and deep blue earth / with fragrant / — irises!) /
I find myself alone here . . . / — surrounded by all that . . . /
— and find I cannot cope . . . / — with the mystery of my . . . //
— uncanny . . . //
— existence . . . ///

"...la lumière nous est un doux fardeau un manteau chaud..."

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, XIV/4/3

2

**LIGHT SEEMS TO US
LIKE A SWEET BURDEN
LIKE A WARM COAT**

η + θ

I DECIDE WHO YOU ARE TO ME

Light seems to us / like a sweet burden / like a warm coat: /
Undulating vineyards / dominated by several hills / under dense . . . //
— cover of / *pubescent oaks* / and embellished by rocks that . . . //
— bathe in sunshine / and the air is packed with history . . . //
— and ancient legends / and over fields to this day . . . //
— still hovers the first portrayal / of a . . . //
— *Prehistoric Woman* //

Light seems to us / like a mysterious burden / like a warm coat /
like one of / many good things / here, in *Sixth Heaven*! //
— The air is bright (!) / and I can remain with . . . //
— guardian angels (!) / (here in these spaces . . . //
— they are called *Eta*) / and together with them . . . //
— admire all / the beauties of . . . //
— *Nature!* //

Light seems to us / like a beautiful burden / like a warm coat . . . /
so what else . . . / — am I missing now (?) / to go further . . . (?) //
. . . the air is clear / and all storms have stormed away . . . //
. . . so why do I feel / that I am not succeeding . . . //
. . . in continuing on my pilgrimage . . . to . . . //
— *Maturity?!* //

Spring had passed / and I was still walking / among *pubescent oaks* /
even summer was gone / and I can't . . . / get enough of the solitude /
And autumn caught up with me . . . / in dialogue with angels /
And the air was . . . / — limpid / And the air was . . . //
— crystalline / And with the rise of winter . . . //
— rosehips turned red / and times were ripe . . . //
— for things at last . . . //
— to begin to happen ///

“...que ce soit le cœur qui va à sa rencontre d’amour ou le dépit...”

T. Tzara, L’Homme approximatif, XVII/11/14

WHETHER A HEART IS GOING TO ENCOUNTER LOVE OR DEFIANCE

... whether it is the *heart* / speeding to its encounter with *Love* / or *defiance* ... //

... whether it is *one* / or *the other* / it’s hard to decide ... //

... which of *the two* / is right / and which ... / — is not ... //

DEFIANCE: You dwell here / in quiet contemplation / and do not consider / how to secure yourself! / Do you deem yourself better / than all those women / who cared about you? / Are you trying to look down / on angels? //

HEART: I do not wish to appear haughty / But the situation is ... / — different: / All those women / just wanted ... / — to own me! ... //

DEFIANCE: Who are you / to want to change / the fundamental facts ... // — of the world!? //

HEART: I do not want to change the world / ... only ... / any of those ... / — women ... / would represent / ... a huge step / — backwards for me now ... //

DEFIANCE: Don’t you know / that without woman / you *wouldn’t be*?! //

HEART: Better “not to be” / than for the sake of a woman ... / — *be* who I don’t want to *be*! //

DEFIANCE: So how do you / picture / your “ideal woman” / (and, in my view ... / — “fantasy”) ... / — the “dream” woman? //

HEART: *She* should be able to dwell / in harmonies of silent song / *She* should belong ... / — to *Seventh Heaven* / and still stroll / these hills / ... here ... / — a level down on ... / — these Moravian plains ... //

DEFIANCE: Hmm ... //

HEART: *She* should be a ... / — being of ... / — beauty and depth / striding ... / — in the same direction / That *angel* should be a ... / — painter of people ... a / — painter ... / who sees well / what I bear ... / — deepest inside ... / — my soul ... / That *Woman* ... //

DEFIANCE: Whoa! ... //

HEART: ... that *Woman* / *AngeLady* / should be / in other words ... // — *Queen of the Moravian Vineyards*! //

DEFIANCE: So, my “dear friend” (my “you-still-don’t-get-it” friend) / I wish you / “from the bottom of my heart” ... / really good luck / in seeking / “such” a *Woman*!!! //

... whether it is the *heart* / speeding to meet *Love* / or *defiance* ... //

... whether it is *one* / or *the other* / we will see ... / which of *the two* ... //

... will *leave* / and which, on the contrary / remains ... / — *within me* ... ///

“...et l'arbre suce la résine aux gamelles des cœurs torrides...”

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, IV/2/4

4

AND A TREE SUCKS RESIN FROM BOWLS OF TORRID HEARTS

I DECIDE WHO YOU ARE TO ME

η + θ

And a tree sucks resin / from bowls / of torrid hearts /
the Tree, that *AngeLady* / *Jana Rosie Theta* / over and again /
came to paint / on her wanderings / through her own /
past / on those hills, where / I myself was looking /
for many answers / surrounded by my . . . /
— guardian . . . / — angels, my *Eta* . . . in . . . //
— quiet recollection //

Jana Rosie Theta / lived in *Seventh Heaven* / but there still remained /
something in the *Sixth* / (something that she didn't get / to really live) /
and thus, consequently / has been returning / to greet the trees /
and when I came / near her / she painted me . . . //
— along with my rootage //

I gaze in wonder / to see who sees so well / what lies in my soul /
and recognize a . . . / — creation . . . / — beautiful and so very deep /
treading / in the same direction . . . / — among the trees //

(And *defiance* / is keeping mum . . . //
— *defiantly* . . . / while the *heart* . . . //
— sings the song of . . . //
— Life . . .) //

And the *Eta* angels rejoice with us . . . /
And boughs shoot to the sky . . . /
And eyelids tingle . . . /
And blackbirds whistle . . . /
And clouds soar . . . /
And the path is . . . /
— full of leaves . . . //
— hungry for our . . . //
— footsteps! ///

“...les lignes de tes mains calleuses qu'à ta naissance
un ange traça...”

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, XVII/11/14

5

THE LINES OF YOUR CALLOUSED HANDS THAT AT YOUR BIRTH AN ANGEL DREW

The lines of your calloused hands / that at your birth . . . /
— an angel drew / cried through . . . / — *night visions* /
Oh, how good it is . . . / that (even in dreaming a . . . / — splendid dream) /
the soul does not . . . / cease its toilsome ways / while heading to . . . //
— *Seventh Heaven* //

~~~~ // ≈DREAM≈ 7 // ~~~~~

In that dream the *Voice* shouted at me . . . / to be whole . . . /  
I must pull myself together! / In that dream the *Voice* called to me . . . /  
wake up!! / In that dream the *Voice* implored me . . . / — to realize . . . //  
that I must continue my . . . / — pilgrimage!!! //

In that dream the *Voice* asked me . . . / if I realize that . . . /  
— through my battles with them . . . / women have given me /  
their energy . . . / and that very energy . . . / is what . . . /  
— I am acutely missing! / In that dream the *Voice* advised me to make . . . /  
— everything for which I am grateful to them / clear to myself!! /  
In that dream the *Voice* . . . / — urged me to grasp that . . . /  
— the time has come to live . . . / — Life differently . . . / — to begin . . . /  
— *Alone* . . . / — the search for *Power*. . . / — within *Myself*!!! ///

~~~~ // ~~~~~ // ~~~~~

With calloused palms / I note the dream . . . / — in my diary /
I will read it . . . / — each and every day . . . / I will read it . . . /
— as often as possible (!) / so as not to forget / that it is *I* . . . /
— who decides / what it means to me . . . / *You* . . . /
— and who are for me . . . / *Them* / my *ex* . . . / *five dames* . . . /
and who is now the angel . . . / — *Jana Rosie* . . . //

— and whom I should see in . . . / — *Myself*! ///

η + θ I DECIDE WHO YOU ARE TO ME

“...les adhérences des cortèges d’ouragans à l’irréalité des molécules...”

T. Tzara, L’Homme approximatif, XI/2/11

THE ATTACHMENT OF A PROCESSION OF HURRICANES TO THE IRREALITY OF MOLECULES

The attachment of a procession of hurricanes / to the irreality . . . //
— of molecules / was strongly felt / between the walls of . . . //
— *Maiden Castle* / in open spaces / illuminated by our . . . //
— glowing auras / So that when . . . / (mutually inflamed) . . . //
— we pulsed . . . / — as one . . . / — *Miraculous Heart* . . . //
— immersed deep . . . / — in lush . . . //
— *Royal* . . . //
— *Blue* //

And the devils got shipwrecked in panic / And they did not like . . . /
— our *Fire* . . . / And they did not like . . . / — our illuminated *Heaven* /
And considered . . . / — how to thwart / all of our . . . / — plans /
And the devils . . . / — called / in all directions / And everywhere . . . //
— lied about us / claiming we had / bad . . . //
— intentions / And claimed that we wanted to set all of . . . //
— *Maiden Castle* //
— ablaze! //

And so from below, from the village of Milovice / firemen surged up . . . //
— heart-felt creatures / who only wanted to . . . //
— extinguish . . . / — a fictitious danger / Yet coming / soon . . . //
— to understand / that here there was . . . / — no blaze . . . (!) //
— except for the one / in our . . . //
— glowing . . . //
— arms . . . //

And at that place / the good people / dropped their helmets and hoses . . . //
— in deep blue irises / and at that place / in the brilliance . . . //
— of shining stars . . . / they promptly crowned us . . . //
— in the landscape under *Maiden Castle* . . . / *King and Queen* . . . //
— *of the Moravian Vineyards* ///

"...la parole seule suffit pour voir..."

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, III/4/23

A WORD ALONE IS ENOUGH TO AWAKEN

A word alone is enough to awaken / A Word full of *Love* / a Word, that . . . /
— does not kill / but . . . / — forgives . . . / Oh, how many words . . . (!) /
— have already been . . . / — wasted in the past / words that don't lead . . . //
— anywhere! //

But today . . . / — on the face of stars, the time . . . / — has come /
A Word yearns to speak / a Word that wants . . . / — to be here with us /
a Word able to . . . / — *Heal!* //

In the *Turquoise Chariot* we slip / from *dark blue* / into *violet* /
and it seems / that *Jana Rosie* / is the first angel / with whom I did not . . . /
— break up . . . / — before entering . . . / — another *Heaven* . . . //

. . . and even before we / went through the passage / to *Seventh Heaven* /
we looked back / at all the / vineyard tracts / covered with . . . /
— dark blue / irises / Between the tracts / something swarmed . . . /
— moving / We spotted there / an angel with a magnifying glass . . . /
— in her hand . . . / — and other figures / that I have ardently recounted /
in these poems: / an angel . . . / — with professor-like glasses /
and then an . . . / — angel with feathers . . . / stained with . . . /
— golden ink . . . / — and another / whose hands / burned wildly . . . /
— in the sunset . . . / — and another and another . . . / there were dozens /
of them . . . / and all of them we . . . / — knew! / And here in the mud . . . /
— traces stamped . . . (?) / Aren't they of my . . . / — mother!?! /
And there a bit further / the much bigger ones / surely belong to . . . /
— my father! / And above all that / (the most beautiful thing!) /
in the form of a . . . / — golden rainbow / an army of little . . . /
— ladybirds . . . / — with lanterns . . . / — soaring now . . . /
— on healed wings . . . / — somewhere . . . //
— beyond horizons! //

At that moment / we finally realized . . . //

— that in *Seventh Heaven* . . . //

— we would not be alone! ///



L

ALLOW THINGS TO GO WHERE THEY WANT

THE PLOT OF THE PREVIOUS PARTS
AND A FEW WORDS REGARDING THE FOLLOWING:

At the beginning of this collection of poems, the Pilgrim, following an unfortunate fall in his childhood, was deprived of vision in his left eye. After a conflict with his mother, he left home and entered the mythical world of Seven Heavens. There he met with a succession of angels who influenced his life. In Sixth Heaven the Pilgrim formed a relationship with the angel Jana Rosie Theta, who was far from being any kind of detour. After their coronation, under Maiden Castle, as King and Queen of the Moravian Vineyards, the couple found themselves at the Gate to Seventh Heaven . . . What occurred in Seventh Heaven can only be deduced, for from there only one poem remains; now it concludes the whole work. Anyway, we continue to search intensively for the ongoing fortunes of the Pilgrim and Jana Rosie Theta and if we uncover anything, we will be sure to let you know . . .

“...avec un œil un seul tourné à l'intérieur...”

T. Tzara, L'Homme approximatif, V/3/13

WITH ONE EYE, WITH ONE EYE ONLY, TURNED INWARD

With one eye / with one eye only . . . / — turned inward /
I now can venture / through new spaces beyond the . . . /
— *Seven Heavens* / because the angel *Iota* / with white wings /
visits me . . . / — at night //

That angel *Iota* / brings me an eye / that one eye . . . /
that one singular eye . . . turned / — inward / that injured eye /
from the first poem . . . / — of this collection / from the first poem . . . //

Who is this angel? / After all, I have the feeling /
I have always been / with him . . . //

— always! //

With one eye / with one eye only . . . / — turned inward /
I now see better . . . / — where I am / The fanfare has passed /
my hay days evaporated / — my slumps gone too— / I no longer need /
any fixed ideas / any fixed religion / any fixed world view /
Today . . . in my own . . . / — heart . . . / — I rest . . . / Today I finally /
begin to understand . . . / — that the angel *Iota* . . . //

— is none other . . . / — than . . . //

— *Myself* . . . //

That angel *Iota* / is none other than . . . / — “He” and “I” and “We” (!) /
. . . all . . . together! / As “Iota—We” / . . . (in that bright afternoon) . . . /
We pave a new path . . . / — onward . . . / As “Iota—I” / I’m running on it /
And as “Iota—He” / *He* keeps me / . . . (or do *I* keep *Myself*?) . . . //

— from falling / so *We* don’t end up / (once more) / in the shards . . . //

— of fate / It’s been a long quest! / Indeed so!!! / But now it’s . . . //

— complete! / And an open *Gate* / invites us to make . . . //

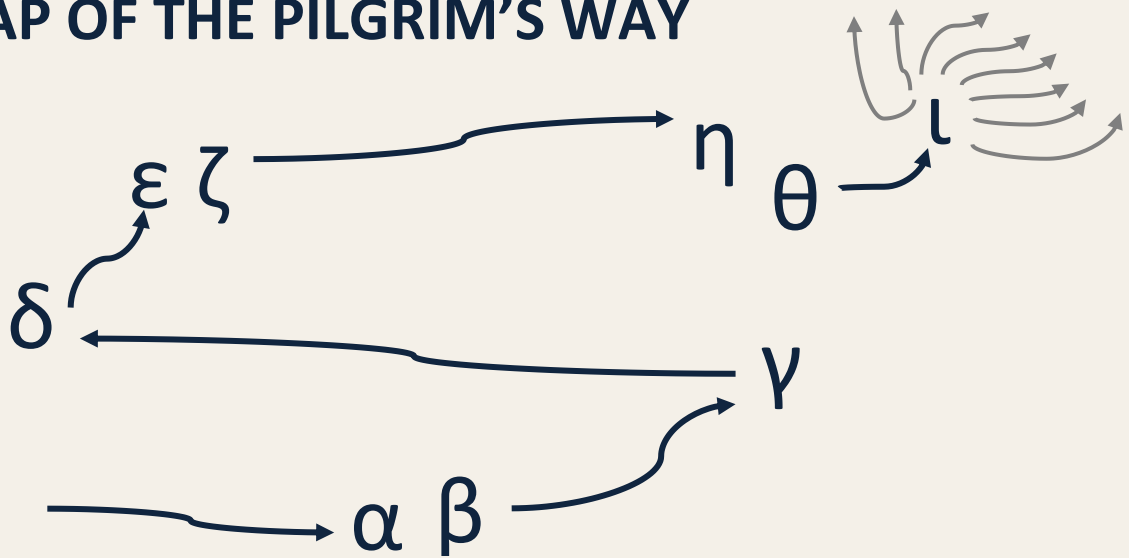
— *Way* / . . . for endless and endless . . . / . . . future *Odes* . . . //

— to Joy // // // // //

III/2020, Jan Iota Škrdlík



MAP OF THE PILGRIM'S WAY



- α – two red lanterns of the *Alpha* angels
- β – *Viera Beta* as a tree with clingy red scarf
- γ – *Petrana Gamma* as a cat with two heads
- δ – lying figure of the *Sarra Delta*

- ε – *Liudi Mila Epsilon* as a frozen flower
- ζ – *Witoslaw Zeta* casting thunderbolts
- η – seven white lights of the *Eta* angels
- θ – *Jana Rosie Theta* in the form of the *Venus of Dolní Věstonice*
- ι – the *Iota* angel with spread white wings

(Illustrations: **Jana Rosie Dvořáková**, *Love in 7 Heavens*, oil, 80x60)

JAN ŠKRDÍK—EPILOGUE TO *VARIATIONS ON TZARA*

The influences reflected in my *Variations on Tzara* arrived gradually, long before the emergence of this work, over nearly three decades preceding the birth of this book.

I would like to briefly mention a few of them . . .

APPROXIMATE MAN AND VARIATIONS ON TZARA

What's the similarity between Tzara's *Approximate Man* and my *Variations on Tzara*, and in which aspects do they differ? This question emerges logically, for each of the fifty-one poems in *Variations* commences with a quotation of verses from Tzara's collection.

So let's consider all the similarities and differences in turn: Considering the form, it's important to mention that, after some apparent hesitation, in *Approximate Man* Tzara did claim allegiance to *Surrealism*. In this aspect, both works must necessarily overlap, for the *New Suprarealism*, the style in which the *Variations* are written, is approximately two-thirds based on *Surrealism* (both styles meet in their mutual expression of material and psychological levels).

But, paradoxically, what characterized their similarity (the similarity of *Surrealism* and *New Suprarealism*) is the basic point of divergence between both styles (in other words, points in which each style differs). The technique of writing that we feel in *Approximate Man* is based on Depth Psychology brought about via automatic writing, dream scenes, and a veritable flood of seemingly non-related connections of shocking images that give an impression of absurdity (but, actually, they *do* have some logic lurking somewhere in their profound depths).

On the one hand, we are astonished and dragged into Tzara's world, on the other, they demand a more mature reader, one able to sustain attention in the midst of this colourful avalanche. The dreaming (psychological) part does, by definition, constitute an entire half (or more) of each *surrealistic* work. This is based on the fact that this way of viewing reality simultaneously occurs on two levels: on the material and on the psychological plane. (Due to the powerful influence of Freud and Jung at a time of full bloom of this style, the psychological part used to be primarily comprised of dream scenes.)

On the contrary, in *New Suprarealistic* work, this "dream" part does not logically prevail, for there are three levels of expression: material, psychological, and spiritual, rendering the psychological part a relatively minor one. For this, the *New Suprarealistic* message makes a more moderate and informal impression rendering it easier to "grasp" for the novice reader. It is also more suitable for epic narration, which the *Variations* undoubtedly are.

In concluding my comparison, I would like to highlight one essential similarity. Both works deal with the same topic, which is the path to True Humanity

and the commensurate search for our Real Identity. In this key point I feel I'm truly taking up the mantle of Tzara. The author of *Approximate Man* died ten months before my birth, and in his lifetime maintained a strong relationship to Czechoslovakia. So I believe that he left a strong energetic footprint here. A footprint I absorbed enough to walk even further down the roads he first made accessible by boldly striding forth . . .

THE CRISIS OF THE MALE (AND ALSO FEMALE) ROLE:

The turn of the second and third millennium is marked by a crisis of the male role; at least that is the general view. In my opinion, however, this view is somewhat narrow. In fact, there is a crisis of both roles, including the female one; the two spheres—the feminine and the masculine—are so intertwined that they cannot be completely isolated, they are “connected vessels.” And it is the search for one's own sexual identity, which begins at an early age before puberty and continues during and after it, that is one of the themes that the sensitive reader may discern in *Variations on Tzara*.

The very opening of this autobiographical fiction novel begins with a scene in which the protagonist, the *Pilgrim* (i.e. I as the author), runs to his father at the age of one, but does not reach him because he falls and injures himself. This can be perceived as a kind of mere “accident,” however the overall style of the narrative suggests that the meaning of the whole event is rather deeply symbolic. Role models, especially those in the family (and parenting most of all), are crucial to identity formation. In this light, the fact that the *Pilgrim* fails to reach his father and is stopped *en route* by an accident takes on the aftertaste of a fatal collapse, not only in terms of the relationship itself, but also in terms of finding one's sexuality.

From an external, physical point of view, this may appear intact: the main character establishes relationships with the opposite sex that do not seem to break out of the normal socio-cultural framework of the time. But the *New Suprarealist* optic in which the work is set insists that something is not quite right here, psychologically and spiritually. A real event (in my life), tragic but in some way “normal,” demands this optic in order to reveal important hidden information. It's not really an “unfortunate coincidence” but a logical consequence!

In the background is a crisis of both the male and female role. The father, to whom the child runs, fails to organize things in a way that protects the child from harm. And the mother? She is absent, absorbed in her own search for self-fulfilment—in this particular case, only the (clueless) father remains on the scene. The whole incident, then, was not an accident, but a clear consequence of the typical problems of the time into which the protagonist was born . . .

The sentence: “**And since then I know / that the path to my father . . . // — leads another way**” could be loosely translated as “*I have come to*

understand that the way to grasp my male role is blocked and that it is necessary, under the circumstances, to find another viable route."

But what was the original (now blocked) path and where to find its new (feasible) form? The original *modus operandi* was called "imitating patterns." But developed society brings new challenges and old patterns are often no longer functional. Discovering a new way, a new way that works, requires a truly revolutionary spirit, but also . . . an honest and often painful search. The novel conveys the idea that the answers (not only) to the above questions are found deep within each person at a point called the *Self*. In the case of the *Pilgrim*, the Path leads across *Seven Heavens*, each one providing a chance for empirical grasping (and understanding) of one very important piece of the great mosaic. That great mosaic called Life . . .

THE CONCEPT OF *SEVEN HEAVENS*

The idea of a pilgrimage through *Seven Heavens* came to me for the first time in the summer of 1993. It arrived while I was driving with my son Filip, who was not yet one year old, on a narrow road through a mysterious, swampy forest in and around Lednice to *Janův hrad* ("John's Castle") when, in the fog in front of me, I glimpsed the backlights of another car. The following image emerged in my fantasy: The car in front of me transformed into an angel flying low over the earth, clutching in each hand a red lantern. This was the *Guide*, helping *Pilgrims* to cross the thin border to other worlds. This was followed by another image, that of seven floors or dimensions of the Universe, known as the *Seven Heavens*. In my fantasy, the task of the angel was to lead the *Pilgrims* to these dimensions.

I tried to give this artistic fiction, which was very attractive to me, a concrete form, but fortunately I put this creative intention "on the shelf." Why "fortunately"? Because I still needed more time for the realization of a work of this kind, a long process of personal development to attain artistic and human maturation . . .

DON QUIXOTE AND A HUNDRED YEARS OF SOLITUDE

Approximately at this time I became absorbed by Cervantes's *Don Quixote*. I brought home an excellent edition from Spain, with a fabulous introduction, and my knowledge of the Spanish language enabled me to read the text in the original. The masterly mingling of hard reality with the dreamy world of the protagonist's images was highly inspiring for me. I immersed myself in the reading of this two-thousand-page book to such an extent, that I read it at least twenty times. In the end, the volume fell apart into fragments which I carried with me on concert tours all over the world.

Ten years later, another novel written in Spanish came into view: *A Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel García Márquez. I discovered it in a bookshop in Brno on a shelf with books in foreign languages. After reading a randomly

found page I was not able to put it down. This novel, written in the style of *Magic Realism*, nevertheless made one important thing clear to me. Looking “beyond” reality does not necessarily imply a “negation” of reality. On the contrary! In this approach, reality may be emphasized and even highlighted.

SPANISH REALISTS AND SURREALISTS

In 2008, desiring to broaden my horizons, I started to study Spanish Language and Literature at Masaryk University in Brno. Reading thousands of pages of classical texts of Realism, like those of Benito Pérez Galdós, Emilia Pardo Bazán and Leopoldo Alas Clarín, left me in silent astonishment as to precisely how they mastered the ability to deal with experiences of reality at such a profound depth. It was at this time that the first consequences of the information (and *disinformation*) explosion became visible.

It was becoming more and more clear that the virtual world cannot grant salvation itself and that it is not the *quantity* of received data that is decisive for human life, but its *quality*. Sometime later came my reading of the *Surrealists*. I was fascinated by the possibility of integrating the sphere of the human psyche into my vision. Lorca’s *Romancero gitano (Gypsy Ballads)* struck me like lightning out of the blue. After I had read it, I decided never to write poems as before. I felt some essential duty to myself, a duty to find my own distinctive style, one better suited to depicting a fresh view of the world . . .

EXCOMMUNICATION FROM THE CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

In 2010 an event occurred that had great impact on my worldview and subsequently on my creative works. In that year, in connection with my divorce, I found myself expelled from a Protestant denomination called the *Church of the Brethren*. Having to face background manipulation, a campaign of disinformation and collective hypocrisy (which was extremely difficult for me), sparked the need to inquire what precisely is hidden behind what we mistakenly call “indisputable reality.”

Do we view it as such because it really *is* so? Or merely because we do not see all the connections and do not know all the facts? At this time, I adopted the following rule for examining the authenticity of things: No “truth” is the real Truth, when it does not arrive hand-in-hand with Love.

In *Variations*, members of the *Church of the Brethren* are depicted as *Alpha* angels. In the beginning, they have a positive role, but they are not actively able to deal with manipulation, so step by step they end up as yes-men to evil . . .

SANZ BRIZ AND A SMILE IN THE ABYSS OF TIME

Ever since first encountering the works of Federico García Lorca, I’d been searching for a fullness of expression—and, in 2013 I successfully found it through poetic language while working on my composition *Sanz Briz and a Smile in the Abyss of Time*. This extensive poem about the Spanish ambassador Ángel San

Briz, who found himself in Budapest in 1944 following his decision to rescue more than 5,000 Jews, was something far more than just the description of a witness of that time. For me, it became a way of freshly viewing reality from three perspectives at once: from the material, psychological, and spiritual dimensions. With this work the rise of a new style, *New Suprarealism*, was born.

The opportunity to produce it at dozens of performances of Hungarian classical music along with partaking in translations into Spanish and English, plus two melodramas composed with the use of this poem by two composers from the U.S. and Mexico (all working independently), all of this, was highly significant to me. For a long time to come, and without any pressure, no less in three languages, I could explore the new (not only) literary style which I had invented . . .

NEW SUPRAREALISM MANIFESTO

Less than a year after finishing *Sanz Briz* I initiated the proclamation of a new artistic style, called *New Suprarealism*. This style struggled (as mentioned above) to capture reality from three viewpoints: from the material, psychological, and spiritual. In the Brno revue *KAM*, the *Manifesto of New Suprarealism* was published and signed by people closely aligned with me in their opinions. One of them was sculptor Jiří Netík with whom, alongside painter Antonín Stříž, we began to produce the first improvised music in this style.

HOW I CAME TO KNOW TRISTAN TZARA'S APPROXIMATE MAN

In 2015, I translated a theatrical farce by Alfred Rodríguez López-Vásquez into Czech: *We, Russian Noblewomen, Make Love in French*. A year later, it was first presented in Czech on the stage of the *Art Klub* in Brno. During this premiere, Alfredo gave me a book which he had translated from French into Spanish. It was the classic collection of poems *Approximate Man* by Tristan Tzara.

The principal work of this author, never before translated to Czech, influenced me so much that I decided to write variations on some of its verses. At that time, the idea of a connection with variations on Tzara's verses with the theme of a pilgrimage through *Seven Heavens* had not yet fully crystallized.

Nor had the future image of these *Heavens* themselves crystallized, which soon transformed into a variation on seven chakras, or, if you like, seven stages of human development, beginning with the lowest (rather animal) base and ending with the highest level, characterized by a spiritual dimension. This idea of interconnection came later when another important person entered my life.

JANA ROSIE DVOŘÁKOVÁ

Towards the end of 2018 my relationship, on both a personal and artistic level, began with Jana Rosie. Creativity and human freedom, characterizing this relationship from its very beginning, enriched my search for how to render and express reality in many ways. In our common life wanderings and artistic endeavours, many new inspirations were gradually maturing. It is from this period to which the final version of *Variations* may be dated. You may find many stories which Jana Rosie and I actually experienced together in the collection itself . . .

WHAT ARE THE SPECIFIC EXPRESSIONS OF THE *NEW SUPRAREALISM* IN POETRY?

In conclusion, it's important to deal with expressions of the *New Suprarealism* in poetry. Naturally, there is a general level—the three preconditions mentioned above, under which a work can be considered to be a *newsuprarealistic* one. These are the same for any other kind of art (music, painting, etc.) and demand that the work simultaneously deal with reality from three points of view: material, psychological, and spiritual. Poetry itself brings some fresh technique and elements into the frame of this new style, some of which a reader will naturally notice in the course of reading. Here are just a few:

Metrics of Verse: Rhythmical stratification of the text and all its tectonics are to be found in this new poetic form, a new way of writing (and of course, of recitation). It constitutes a so-called “barring of the verses.” Individual verses are no longer prefabricated building blocks of a wider unit with the same structure of standardized rhythm in the way we are accustomed to from the fourteen-syllabic *alexandrian* verse and more.

In *newsuprarealistic* poetic work, every verse is, rather, akin to one of many bars in a wider musical composition. Every “bar” of this kind has its own inner rhythm, which is interconnected with the rhythm of “other bars” in a loose way, with the potential of transformation and mutation, enabling them to take on further developing rhythmical influence.

From the point of view of the specific written record, there occurs an interconnection of musical and literary influences. Slashes dividing “bared verses” are parallel to the double line in the staff of a score of music. In addition, there is also a “triple slash,” marking the end of some wider unit which is parallel to the double line at the end of some music compositions or movements. (As musicians know, this differs from the double line inside the composition.)

Perhaps it seems rather complicated at first, but actually the whole record involves the simplicity of a pictograph with all its graphic illustrative nature, so it may be intuitively understood even by a reader who lacks the theoretical knowledge mentioned above. With the intention to rid the text of redundant elements, I elected to leave out the full stop or comma at the end of each verse; I determined that a slash represents a sufficient division mark. I utilized this form of text record for the first time in the summer of 2013, in the poem *What the Hell*

Does This Mean? (Co tohleto má ksakru znamenat?) and also (immediately following) in *Sanz Briz and a Smile in the Abyss of Time*.

Tirades: Because individual groupings of “bared verses” are characterised by a high irregularity and unrestrainedness, and because their character is far from the regular *strophes* known in classical poetry, I gave these clumps of verse another name—*tirades*.

Arrangement of individual emphases and accents in the text: With its dramatic character and its heightened message, *newsuprarealistic* poetic text naturally lends itself to dramatic production on stage. Stage declamation (to avoid being boring) demands individual sections and words to bear different emphases. Some of them would be more accented than others (and, logically, some others must have a milder accent). The record of accents in the text is based on the knowledge that, in human speech, the accent happens with a minute heightening of the syllable called upon to be accented. Thus the emphasized word is preceded with a kind of “dramatic micropause.” In *newsuprarealistic* text, it is marked with a dash.

Example: “and above in . . . / — silver mists /”

The preceding “and above in . . . ” incorporates three points, that also evoke a heightening, and so the final verse (“ — silver mists ”) is naturally delayed, which renders it accented. Again, all this should be intuitively felt by the reader, who might lack the aforementioned knowledge, but the graphic form of the text should work here without any detailed explanation . . .

ABOUT THE ENGLISH VERSION OF *VARIATIONS ON TZARA*

I wrote *Variations on Tzara* in two original language versions. I finished the first one in Czech in March 2020. It was followed by the second one in Spanish, which I finished in June of the same year, but the English version was still missing because my expressive skills in that language were not yet up to the task. Meanwhile, I met a very important person: Canadian musician, film editor and English translator Thomas McComb. He was the one who decided to take on this task. He participated in it directly as the creator of the text, as well as the coordinator of the translation team and the supervisor of the entire project. The work started with me writing “A Manual for the Translation of *Variations on Tzara*” in November 2020. Therein I described my guidelines for translation, including which realities were to be preserved verbatim in the translation and which could be changed, which linguistic phenomena were necessary to be respected, and which were not essential and therefore could be modified in another language and why this was so. The second step was the technical translation of both *Variations* and the *Manual*, which was undertaken with great care by Ruth Jochanan Weiniger.

The actual work on the creation of the English version followed. Most of the English text in play is from American poet Lucien Zell. Lucien’s undeniable language

skills have certainly become an integral part of this work and his poetic expertise is what really brings the English version to life. However, I still consider Tom to be the “main creator of the English text.” It was he who initiated and brought everything to form. It was he who woke up at night thinking, “This passage must be like this, and the next one like that!” It was he who watched over the integrity of the overall work and that connections between individual parts were not lost.

The first rendition of the English version was finalized in May 2023. In June 2023, I proposed approximately 60 changes to the text, which Tom and I subsequently worked out. It even happened that this entire process inspired me to compose a final tirade for the entire work which did not exist in either in the Czech or the Spanish version and was therefore created only in June of 2023. Several changes were also suggested in July 2023 by Richard Wilson, my good friend & English collaborator on many art projects. In all cases, Tom had the last word on the final version of the text.

I trust, dear reader, that you will enjoy it.

THE TOPIC OF THE EYE (NOT ONLY THE INJURED ONE)

In these reflections on the influences and connections that first led me to the composition of my *Variations on Tzara*, I would like to conclude with the topic of the eye, at the beginning

“. . . injured . . .”

and at the end

“. . . turned inward . . .”

In *Approximate Man*, Tzara used the motive of eyes abundantly (in 69 verses), either in plural (“eyes”) or singular (“eye”).

In plural (47 occurrences), the motive is connected with social appeal. The verse “do not close your eyes yet” is used five times, as the only direct motif in the whole collection. Most probably, it is a kind of call for “seeing,” in other words, for the “attentive searching for things.” In singular (22 occurrences) the word “eye” has a more intimate tone, either in the sense of being “injured by the world” or, on the contrary, referring to “self-examination.”

Shortly before completing the text of *Approximate Man* in 1930, Tzara saw a surrealist cult film, the cinematographic opus from Buñuel—*The Andalusian Dog (Un chien andalou)*. The film begins with a famous scene depicting the cutting of an eye by a razor. Is it mere chance, or are there further connections between these two works? While I do not know for certain, I can confirm that I deliberately decided to use Tzara’s verse “injured eye” and eye “turned inward.”

These verses left a deep impression on me not only because of their similarity to my own personal story, but also because of the profound symbolism of each human's search for a relationship to the world surrounding him and, simultaneously, the search for himself. Tzara and I connected to the same topic /
connected to the same search //
a search that now leads us . . . / and you . . . / dear reader . . . /
deeper and deeper into . . . //
— *Mystery* ///

Jan Škrdlík

JAN ŠKRDLÍK
VARIATIONS
ON TZARA



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ON A FICTIONAL JOURNEY FROM PLANET EARTH TO "SEVENTH HEAVEN", THE AUTHOR MEETS AGAIN WITH THE FIVE WOMEN WHO MOST SIGNIFICANTLY INFLUENCED HIS PAST LIFE AND THEN WITH HIS CURRENT PARTNER JANA ROSIE. BUT THE AUTHOR NEEDS TO PENETRATE TO AN EVEN HIGHER SPACE IN ORDER TO FINALLY BE ABLE TO CONNECT WITH HIS BEING SELF...

JAN ŠKRDLÍK
VARIATIONS
ON TZARA

