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## KAZYS BRADŪNAS: SIX POEMS

Translated by RITA DAPKUS

### A LULLABY FOR ME

At last  
Time has stopped —  
At last  
The game has ended.  
At last,  
At last  
Sleep, die out with the fire . . .  
Sleep . . . die out . . . with the little fire

### AFTER 60

After sixty years on earth,  
When, it seems, I have already been  
Both a skylark and a rock,  
A tree and a kernel of grain  
A slice of bread and a sip of wine,  
There is something to be joyous and regretful about,  
While looking at the smoke of a fire  
Which is leaning toward the cold —  
I start to be earth.

### TEMPTATION

From the steeple of St. John's bell tower  
At your feet lies  
A city,  
History  
And the present,  
Life  
and death.

Choose —  
All will be yours:

Bread,  
Honor  
And domain —  
If you bow to the idol  
With your head held high . . .

But you take freedom,  
Paying for it with your death.

## WHILE THE CHILD'S SUN STILL SHINES

God commanded me to be —  
And I hang on  
Like a tiny ant in the sand.  
Around me are other little insects,  
Bald and hairy,  
And also a landowner's farm of worms is  
A hole.

God commanded me to be —  
To become weary and pensive,  
To glance at the earth, at the sky,  
And at myself  
While the evening's sun still shines  
Like a window  
In a black ship of clouds.

## LET THE BLOSSOMS BLOOM

(For Loreta and Jurgis)

The river comes flowing  
And brings with it a name.  
Man comes forward  
And brings with him a surname —  
A toponym appears:  
A cross is constructed,  
Smoke rises from a chimney.  
In this way Sūduva was born,  
Absorbed into our hearts.

A daughter comes forward  
And brings with her a fire.  
A son comes forward  
And brings with him bread.  
At the shore of another world,  
In the shade of another sky  
And another tree  
A table is constructed,  
A loaf is sliced —  
Life begins.  
Put your clasped hands  
On the ancient table  
And let the blossoms bloom.

## EXILE

Where did you put my father  
Who wished to die at home?  
Where are the mothers,  
Who followed behind? —  
At a distant shoreline  
Lie their bones.  
From Siberia and from Alaska  
Blows only coldness.

I dig and dig and dig  
The heavy fallow earth.  
Birds collect  
The scattered seed . . .

When I die,  
Children, place under my head  
The hard exile of your kinfolk,  
And God will come and light  
Every icicle.