

ARISTOTELIS VALAORITIS



KYRA FROSSINI

TRANSLATED FROM GREEK BY
PANAGIOTIS A. TSONIS AND ANASTASIOS A. TSONIS

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
NANOS VALAORITIS

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KYRA FROSSINI

by Aristotelis Valaoritis

Kyra Frossini is a historical poem based on real events, which took place in 1801 in the city of Ioannina in Greece, when the country was still under Ottoman rule. It is a great drama with all the elements for a great opera: love, passion, betrayal, repentance, and murder.

The last of plays in verse by poet-authors of the Ionian Islands and Crete since the seventeenth century, the poem is written in the more simple oral form of vernacular Greek. This marks a break both with local Greek and with the erudite tradition of writing in a form of archaic, or purist language, written but not really spoken at the time except in academic and official rhetoric. Deeply rooted in folklore, the characters of the story participate in a sequence of profoundly grim events, with good and evil incessantly alternating.

ARISTOTELIS VALAORITIS (1824–1879), a leading Ionian poet, was a lyrical voice and a crucial link in the development of modern Greek literature. He studied but never practiced law. Instead, his passionate disposition led him to politics and poetry. Through these he worked tirelessly for all national movements of his time and for the promotion of patriotic ideals.

One of his poems, commissioned for the unveiling of the statue of Patriarch Gregory V in Athens, was so enthusiastically received that it secured official recognition of the demotic as the language of poetry.

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Theofanis G. Stavrou, *general editor*

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

ARISTOTELIS VALAORITIS (1824–1879), one of the leading Ionian poets, was a crucial link in the development of modern Greek literature. Although his name is still readily recognizable in Greece, his work is not sufficiently known in English.

The story depicted in this poem is based on real events. It took place in 1801 in the city of Ioannina (also known as Yannina or Yannena) in northwestern Greece, when the country was still under Ottoman rule. It is a great drama with all the elements for a great opera: love, passion, betrayal, repentance, and murder.

The main character of the story is Kyra (Lady) Frossini, who was from a proud family and very beautiful. Frossini was married to a merchant, who at the time was in Venice on business. Ali Pasha, the vizier and ruler of the region, fell in love with her and wanted her to be his mistress. But there was one complication. Frossini was romantically involved with Ali's son, Mouchtar. To take Mouchtar out of the picture, Ali sent him to war, to help an ally who had asked for help. Undeterred, Ali pursues Frossini, who, after Mouchtar's departure, realizes her great sin and repents. Frossini rejects Ali's proposals and promises for riches and power. When Ali threatens her with assault, she injures him. Furious, Ali demands revenge. In order to show his great authority and also in the hope of persuading Frossini to change her mind, he orders her and sixteen other young women to be drowned in Lake Ioannina. Frossini stands firm, finding strength in her Christian faith, and does not give in. As she is being escorted to the lake, she faints and dies. The other sixteen women also die, by drowning. Until the very end, Ali hopes to hear that Frossini showed some weakness, so that his ego would be satisfied, but to no avail.

Another version of the story has Ali killing Frossini at the request of Mouchtar's wife, who was angry because of her affair with her husband. Valaoritis, however, discounts this version. He believes that Ali spread this story on purpose in order to clear himself of his diabolic manipulations against his son and Frossini.

The poem, written in 1859, is considered a landmark in modern Greek literature. It is a historical poem, deeply rooted in folklore, whose characters participate in a sequence of profoundly grim events, with good and evil incessantly alternating.

§

Every translation is a challenge. This is more evident in translating literature where, in addition to being faithful to the original story, the translator must strive to accommodate cultural elements embedded in the work. This challenge is even more pronounced when dealing with a poem written some 150 years ago and staged in a historical setting with rich folklore.

One of the most important and at the same time beautiful aspects of Valaoritis's writing is the passion with which he portrays his major characters. In so doing, he freely interchanges tenses even in the same sentence. While in the Greek language this serves him greatly, when such a sentence is translated into English it might sound incorrect or awkward. In the present translation, we attempted to conserve this uniqueness. But at the same time, when deemed necessary, we translated his verses quite freely, without altering the meaning the poet intended. In a few cases, we considered it appropriate to discount a line or two from the original. Omissions are marked in the Greek text with an asterisk.

This translation was based on the 1961 publication of Valaoritis's work by Filologiki, Thessaloniki, Greece.

INTRODUCTION

AT A TIME when the Greeks were beginning to act with the encouragement of the Russians to regain their freedom and independence, an event took place in the city of Ioannina in Epirus, ruled then by Ali Pasha, a tyrant of Albanian origin born in the village of Tepeleni and the great enemy of the Greeks. The event in question was the drowning of a beautiful Greek woman and sixteen of her companions in the lake of the city. This event was sung by an anonymous folkloric song—which was the motivation of the poet Aristotelis Valaoritis to compose a historic drama in verse, following the example of other Romantic poets of the period such as Byron and Victor Hugo. This is the last of plays in verse composed by poet-authors of the Ionian Islands and Crete since the seventeenth century. Valaoritis, certainly familiar with some of them, whose baroque nature and characteristics were evident both in the plot and versification, attempted to write a drama in the more simple oral form of vernacular Greek which distinguishes it from the other plays written in a dialectical form of Greek, used in the Ionian Islands and Crete. The novelty is important, because it marked a break both with local Greek and with the erudite tradition of writing in a form of archaic, or purist language, written but not really spoken at the time except in academic and official rhetoric.

The play, entitled with the name of the heroine, was a success in its published form and became very popular reading in the nineteenth century. Yet the critics, mainly poets like Palamas, underestimated it, considering it a youthful venture, which it was, but of an extraordinary maturity in the use of dramatic verse. Often lines, paragraphs, and whole passages can be compared to Elizabethan drama, especially close to the analyses of these plays by T. S. Eliot. The flexibility of the

verse, with its enjambments and rhyming patterns, is clearly an innovation of the poet. The fifteen-syllable verse of the oral demotic poems is adapted to dramatic speech in an astonishing manner, and for the first time.

§

The story is adapted from information the poet had from historical sources. The liaison of Euphrosync (Frossini), the married Greek woman, with Mouchtar, the son of Ali Pasha, transgressing all the norms of behavior of Christian women toward their Muslim conquerors, was subject for a dramatic confrontation of a Romantic kind. This, complicated by the attempt of the aging Ali to seduce his son's mistress and lover, and her vigorous resistance to his advances, turns her from a simple sinner into a national heroine, of the faith and integrity of Greek women, whom the pasha vengefully punished with death by drowning, including her female companions.

Ali Pasha is shown as an atheist, influenced by the ideology of the free thinkers of the French Revolution whose representatives he courted, in an inner struggle between his superstitious fears and the conflicting faiths of Christian Orthodoxy and Islam.

The same conflict occurs in the heroine, whose transgression is love, set against her moral beliefs and causing the inner struggle she undergoes. In this respect, the drama is not merely a simplistic clash of different faiths and ethnicities, but a sophisticated attempt at individual characterization of the heroes.

§

Valaoritis, following his romantic and nationalistic feelings, uses this legendary event in order to demonstrate how the demotic Greek language can express complicated psychological conflicts within and without the person, in the fifteen-syllable verse, and in eleven-syllable verse, a lyrical passage recited by Mouchtar. That too seems unusual, to put beautiful lines in the mouth of a Turk. Valaoritis desired to underline the romantic character of the liaison between Frossini and Mouchtar, to give more relief to the horrible father's designs.

The popularity of the dramatic poem, which circulated widely, contradicts the critics' opinion of the work, and shows that the public's taste is not always off the mark.

I am happy that the English-language version will give an opportunity to the American public to get to know this dramatic poem of my ancestor, whose memory I cherish—and whose reputation as a poet I defend, even if his cult as a national poet has largely overshadowed it.

Nanos Valaoritis
Athens
19 January 2007

Η ΚΥΡΑ ΦΡΟΣΥΝΗ

ΑΣΜΑ ΠΡΩΤΟΝ

ΤΟ ΜΥΣΤΗΡΙΟΝ

Ἐπέσανε τὰ Γιάννινα σιγὰ νὰ κοιμηθοῦνε,
ἐσβύσανε τὰ φῶτά τους, ἐκλείσανε τὰ μάτια.
Ἡ μάνα σφίγγει τὸ παιδί βαθὺὰ στὴν ἀγκαλιά της,
γιατ' εἶναι χρόνιι δύστυχοι καὶ τρέμει μὴ τὸ χάσῃ.
Τραγοῦδι δὲν ἀκούεται, ψυχὴ δὲν ἀνασαίνει.
Ὁ ὕπνος εἶναι θάνατος, καὶ μνημα τὸ κρεββάτι,
κ' ἡ χώρα κοιμητήριον, κ' ἡ νύχτα ῥημοκκλησι.

Ἄγρυπνος ὁ Ἀλήπασας ἀκόμη δὲν νυστάζει
κ' εἰς ἓνα δέρμα λειονταριοῦ βρίσκεται ξαπλωμένος.
Τὸ μέτωπό του εἶναι βαρὺ, θολό, συγνεφιασμένο
καὶ τῷ βάλαν ἀντίστυλο τὸ χέρι του, μὴ πέσῃ,
χαϊδεύει μὲ τὰ δάχτυλα τὰ κάτασπρά του γένηια
ποῦ σέρνονται στοῦ λειονταριοῦ τῇ φοβερῇ τῇ χήτῃ.
Ἀγκαλιασμένα τὰ θεριά, σοῦ φαίνεται πῶς ἔχουν
ἓνα κορμὶ δικέφαλο· τὸ μάτι δὲ γνωρίζει
ποῖο τάχα νᾶν' τὸ ζωντανὸ καὶ ποῖο τὸ σκοτωμένο.
Στὴν ἄκρῃ στοῦ παράθυρο σιωπηλὸς προσμένει
καὶ τρομασμένος τὸν θεωρεῖ ὁ φίλος του ὁ Ταχέρης.
Μέσα στὴ μαύρῃ τὴν ἐρμιά τοῦ κόσμου, ποῦ χαλοῦσαν
οἱ προδοσιαῖς, οἱ σκοτωμοί, ἀπόκριφαις ἐλπίδες
βαστοῦν ἐκεῖναις ταῖς καρδιαῖς ἀκόμη ἀλυσσομένης.
Ἀπόψε τί στοχάζονται; ... Τί μυστικὸ τὸν ὕπνῳ
στὰ μάτια τους νὰ καταβῇ ἀπόψε δὲν ἀφίκει; ...

KYRA FROSSINI

FIRST SONG

THE SECRET

The city of Yannena lay down to sleep
lights went out, eyes closed.
Mothers clasp their children tightly in their bosoms,
afraid of losing them in these hard times.
Not a single song is heard, not a soul draws a breath.
Sleep is death, beds are graves,
the country's a graveyard, the night an empty church.

But Ali Pasha cannot sleep
he lies awake on a lion's skin.
His forehead heavy, clouded, gloomy
resting on one of his hands
with fingers stroking his white beard,
that drags along the lion's magnificent mane.
Intertwined the two beasts
look like a double-headed body
indiscernible to tell which is alive and which is dead.
On the side, by the window his friend Tahir
waits staring at him aghast.
In the dark wilderness of a world
ruined by treason and killing, some secret hope
keeps alive chain-bound hearts.
What do they think of tonight? ... What secret
lets no sleep weigh on their eyes? ...

Άλῆς

Ταχῆρ, Ταχῆρ! ἐκύτταξες νὰ ἴδῃς ἂν τὸ φεγγάρι
ἐφάνηκε στὸν οὐρανό; Δυὸ ὥραις τὸ προσμένω.
Εἶναι σχεδὸν μεσάνυχτα, γιατί νὰ μὴ προβαίῃ;

Ταχῆρ

Ἐπρόβαλεν... εἶναι θολὸ καὶ κόκκινο σὰν αἷμα.
Σύννεφα μαύρα καὶ βαρὺ ἀνεβοκατεβαίνουν
καὶ φεύγουν σὰ φαντάσματα. Ὁ ἄνεμος τὰ σπρώχνει
καὶ τὰ σωρεύει ἐπάνω του μὲ λύσσα, μὲ μανία.
Ὡσὰν ἀέρια κύματα, τὸ δέρνουν, τὸ χτυποῦνε,
καὶ λὲς πὼς θὰ τὸ πνίξουν, καὶ λὲς πὼς θὰ τὸ σβύσουν.
Πυκνὴ θολοῦρ' ἀπ' τὰ βουνά, Βιζήρη μου, τοῦ Πίνδου
ἀπλώνεται στὸν οὐρανό, κ' ἐσκέπασε τὰστέρια.
Τί σάβανο κατὰμαυροί τί νύχτα! τί τρομάρα!

Άλῆς

Σὲ σκιάζουνε τὰ σύννεφα, σὲ σκιάζει τὸ φεγγάρι,
γιατί τὸ βλέπεις κόκκινο, τὸ βλέπεις ματωμένο;
Τόσον καιρὸ μὲ τὸν Ἄλῆ ἀπ' τὰ μικρά σου νεῖατα,
κι ἀκόμη δὲ συνείθισες τέτοια βαφὴ νὰ βλέπῃς;
Ἐπίστεψες πὼς ἤθελα νὰ μάθω καὶ ν' ἀκούσω
πὼς τὸ φεγγάρ' εἶναι χλωμὸ καὶ πὼς ἐρωτεμμένο
ἐπρόβαλε τὴ λάμψι του νὰ χύσῃ ὀλόγυρά μου;
Ἐπίστεψες πὼς ἤθελα τὴ δροσερὴ του ἀχτίδα
ὥσάν παρθενικὸ φιλὶ στὰ χεῖλιά μου νὰ νοιώσω;
Ἀκόμη δὲ μ' ἐγινώρισες! Δὲν ἔμαθες ἀκόμη
πὼς πάντα μαύρα σύννεφα, πάντα βαρὺς χειμῶνας,
πάντα σκοτάδι μ' ἀστραπαῖς ἐστάθηκε ἡ ζωὴ μου.
Τὸ μέτωπό μου ἐγέρασε, ἡ τρίχες μου ἀσπρίζουν,
κι ἀκόμη δὲν ἐγινώρισα τοῦ κόσμου τὴ γαλήνη.
Κι ἀπόψε, ἀπόψε, ποῖθελα, ἀπόψε, ποῦ ποθοῦσα
νὰ καταλάβουν τὰ στοιχεῖά τί μαύρη τρικυμία
μουγκρίζει μὲς στὰ στήθη μου καὶ πόσ' ἀστροπελέκια
μοῦ κατασχίζουν τὴν καρδιά, ἀπόψε σὺ φοβεῖσαι;
Φοβεῖσαι λίγα σύννεφα θολά, ποῦ ἀνεμοδέρνουν,
καὶ τὴ μαυρίλα τοῦ βουνοῦ καὶ τῆς βροντῆς τὸν κρότο;
Σύρε δειλέ. Τί σκέκεσαι, Ταχῆρ, ἐδῶ σιμά μου;
Σύρε νὰ γίνῃς σύντροφος τοῦ υἱοῦ μου τοῦ Μουχτάρη.

6

Ali

Tahir, Tahir! Did you see the moon
appear in the sky? Two hours I am waiting.
It is almost midnight, why hasn't it appeared yet?

Tahir

It appeared... but is dim and red like blood.
Black and heavy the clouds roll
and run off like ghosts. The wind pushes them
and piles them on the moon with rage and fury.
They strike and beat it like waves,
as if they want to smother it and drown it.
My Vizier, a thick gloom from Mount Pindos
spreads in the sky, covering the stars.
Like a black shroud! What a night! What a fright!

Ali

Are you afraid of the clouds, do you fear the moon,
because you see it red, because you see it bloody?
You have been with me since your early years
and still you are not used to seeing such a color?
Did you believe that I wanted to hear and know
that the moon is pale and as if in love appeared
to throw its splendor around me?
Did you believe that I yearned to feel on my lips
its fresh beam like a virgin's kiss?
You still do not know me! You never learned
that my life was always filled with black clouds,
heavy winters, and with lightning-filled darkness.
My face is old, my hair is white
and I have yet to know peace of mind.
And tonight, when I wished, tonight when I desired
the spirits to fathom what kind of black tempest
is bellowing inside my chest and how many bolts
tear my heart apart, tonight you are afraid?
You are afraid of a few gloomy clouds
tossed by the wind and of the roar of the thunder?
Get out, coward. Why do you stand close to me?
Go on and become a comrade of my son, Mouchtar.

7

Tachir

Βιζήρη μου, πατέρα μου, γιατί γιατί με διώχνεις;
Τόσον καιρό μ' αγάπησες σαν νάμουνα παιδί σου,
κι άπόψε μ' άπαρηγόησες; με διώχνεις, μ' άτιμάζεις;
Βιζήρη, πότε έδειλσας, ή πότε αυτό τὸ χέρι
πιστὰ δὲ σ' ὑπηρέτησε; μὴ με καταφρονέσης.
Πές μου, τί θέλεις ἀπὸ μέ; Οἱ δύο μας ἐνωμένοι
μποροῦμε νὰ χαλάσουμε τὴν ὡμορφιά τοῦ κόσμου·
μποροῦμε, ἀν τὸ θελήσωμε, τὰ δένδρα νὰ μᾶς βλέπουν
κι ἀμέσως νὰ μαραίνονται, τὰ φύλλα τους νὰ ρίχνουν.
Ὅθε διαβαίνομε μαζὶ ν' ἀχνίζουμε τὰ ρόδα,
καὶ νὰ διψοῦνε γιὰ δροσιὰ τὰ χόρτα, τὰ λουλούδια,
Βιζήρη, ὅπου πατήσωμε. Ἡ μάνα ν' ἀποόρίζη,
ὅταν ἰδῇ τὸν ἱσκίο μας· στὰ στήθη της τὸ γάλα
νὰ γίνεται πικρὴ χολή, περίδρομος, φαρμάκι.
Πές μου, τί θέλεις ἀπὸ μέ; Ἄλλῃ, δοκίμασέ με.

Ἄλλῃς

Ταχίρ, παιδί μου, σιώπησε· φθάνει, συχώρεσέ με·
τόσπν αισθάνομαι γιὰ σέ ἀγάπη καὶ φιλία,
ποῦ σκιάχτηκα μὴν ἤθελες ἀπόψε νὰ μ' ἀφήσης.
Νᾶξερές πόσαις κόλασαις, πόσα σκληρὰ μαχαίρια
μοῦ κόβουνε τὰ σωθικά! Ταχίρ, παρακάλεσέ
γιὰ τὸ Βιζήρη τὸν Ἄλλῃ. Πρόσταξε τὰ στοιχεῖα
νὰ με βοηθήσουνε, Ταχίρ, καὶ πές στὰ καταχθόνια
πῶς γιὰ μίαν ὥρα, μιὰ στιγμή, κορμί, ψυχή, τὸ βιό μου,
ὅλα τὰ δίνω, μιὰ στιγμή νὰ μοῦ χαρίσουν μόνον.
Καὶ σύ, ψυχὴ τῆς μάνας μου, πῶρχεσαι κάθε βράδυ
καὶ πέφτεις καὶ σωριάζεσαι σιμά μου στὸ κρεβάτι,
καὶ μοῦ ἐνθυμίζεις με φιλιὰ, με δάκρυα, τὸ Γαρδίκι,
ὅχι ἔλα, παιτοδύναμη, λησμονήσε μίαν ὥρα
τὴ φοβερὴ σου ἐκδίκησι. Μάνα μου, βοήθησέ με,
ἀν μ' ἀγαπᾷς, ἀν πιθυμῇς κ' ἐγὼ νὰ σοῦ πλερώσω
τὸ χάρισμα ποῦ ὠτάξα, μάνα μου, βοήθησέ με.

Tachir

Βιζήρη μου, τί μυστικό, τί πόνος σέ σπαράζει;
Δὲν εἰμι' ἐγ' ὁ πνευματικός, ὁ φίλος σου, Βιζήρη;
Πές μου, τί θέλεις τὰ στοιχεῖα, τὸν ἄδῃ τί τὸν θέλεις;

Tahir

My Vizier, my father, why do you send me away, why?
For all these years you have loved me like your own child
and tonight you renounce me, drive me away, disgrace me.
My Vizier, tell me, when did I show fear? When did this hand
refuse to serve you? Do not disdain me.
Tell me what you wish from me. The two of us together
can ruin the beauty of the world;
a single sight of us can wither the trees leafless.
When we walk together, roses, grass, and flowers bloom
and beg for morning's dew.
At the sight of our shadow, mothers abort;
their milk turns to poison and bile.
Tell me, what do you want from me? Ali, put me to the test!

Ali

Tahir, my child, calm down, forgive me;
I feel so much love and friendship for you
that I was afraid you wanted to leave me tonight.
If you only knew what kind of hell,
how many hard knives tear my guts to pieces!
Tahir, pray for Ali.
Order the spirits to help me, Tahir
tell them that my body, my soul, all I possess
I would give for just one hour, one moment,
if they grant me one moment only.
And you, soul of my mother, which comes every night
and lays by me in bed
and with kisses and tears remind me of Gardiki.¹
Omnipotent mother, forget
for one hour your horrible revenge.
Mother, help me, if you love me,
and if it is your wish,
I will fulfill the favor I promised. Mother, help me.

Tahir

My Vizier, what kind of secret, what pain tears you apart?
Am I not your spiritual friend, my Vizier?
Tell me, why do you need the spirits, the hell dwellers?

Τὰ κόκκαλα τῆς μάνας σου γιατί νὰ τὰ ξυπνήσης;
 Ἐγὼ καὶ σὺ δὲν εἶπαμε πὼς φθάνομε μονάχοι;
 Ἄλλη βοήθεια τί ζητεῖς; Εἰν' ἐντροπὴ δική μας
 οἱ ζωντανοὶ νὰ κράζουμε βοήθεια πεθαμμένους.
 Πές μου, τί θέλεις; τί ποθεῖς; Ποτέ, ποτέ δὲν σ' εἶδα,
 Βιζύρη μου, σὰ σήμερον ἀχνὸν καὶ ταραγμένον.
 Ἐσύ, ἔσύ, ὑποῦ βαστάς τόσαις ζωαῖς στὸ χέρι,
 ποῦ σέ μιὰ μόνη σου ματιὰ τὰ Γιάνινα βυθίζουν,
 καὶ Ἀρβανιτιά καὶ Ροῦμελι ἐμπρός σου γονατίζουν,
 καὶ στὴ φωνή του τ' Ἀγραφα ραγίζονται καὶ τρέμουν,
 ἔσύ, ἀπόψ' ἐδείλιασες; Βεζύρη μου, θυμήσου
 τὴ φοβερή σου δύναμη. Σ' ἐκράξαμε λιοντάρι.

Ἀλῆς

Ταχίρ, δὲ θέλω ἐκδίκησαις, αἶμα, Ταχίρ, δὲ θέλω
 ἂν ἦτανε γιὰ φονικά, δὲ σ' ἐκράξα βοήθεια.
 Λησμονήσα τὰ πάθη μου, λησμονήσα ταῖς ἔχθραις·
 ὅλα μοῦ φύγαν ἀπ' τὸ νοῦ. Μπορῶ νὰ σοῦ τώρκισω,
 Ταχίρ, ὅτ' ἐλησμονήσα ἀπόψε καὶ τὸ Σοῦλι,
 τὸ Σοῦλι, ποῦ μ' ἐθέρισε, ποῦ μ' ἄδειασε τὴ φλέβα
 βοφώντας ἀκατάπαυστα τὸ αἷμα τῆς καρδιάς μου,
 τὸ Σοῦλι, ποῦ μοῦ ἐντρόπιασε τὰ κάτασπρά μου γένεα,
 ἀπόψε τὸ λησμονήσα. Τὸ Λάμπρο τὸ Τζαβέλλα,
 μοῦ φαίνεται ἂν τὸν ἔβλεπα στὰ πόδια μου σφαμμένον,
 κι ἂν ἤμπορούσε ἀνθρώπινη δύναμις νὰ τοῦ δώσῃ
 πάλε τὴν πρώτη του ζωὴ, γιὰ νὰ μὲ μαρτυρέψῃ.
 μὰ τὴν ψυχὴ τῆς μάνας μου, ἤθελα τοῦ τὴ δώσῃ,
 ἂν ἤμπορούσα μιὰ στιγμή, Ταχίρ, κ' ἐγὼ νὰ ἐλπίσω.
 Ἄν μῶλεγαν νὰ γύριζα στὴν πρώτη μου τὴ φτώχεια,
 νὰ τρέχω ἐπάνω στὰ βουνὰ καὶ νὰ καταφρονιῶμαι,
 Ταχίρ, δὲ λέγω ψέμματα, τῶκανα, στὴν ψυχὴ μου,
 ἂν ἤμπορούσα μιὰ στιγμή νὰ λάβαιν' ἀπ' τὴ φύση
 τῆς ἀνοιξὸς τὴν ὡμορφιά, τὴ μυρωδιὰ τοῦ ρόδου,
 τοῦ φεγγαριοῦ τὸ φέρεμα, καὶ τῆς κιτριᾶς τὰ νιῶτα,
 ἂν ἤμπορούσα μιὰ στιγμή, Ταχίρ, νὰ ξανανιώσω.
 Βλέπεις, παιδί μου, τί ζητῶ; Βλέπεις, ἡ δύναμή μου
 δὲ φθάνει. Τὰ γεράματα μ' ἐπλάκωσαν, μὲ γέρουνον

Why do you wish to rouse your mother's bones?
 Did we not decide that you and I are enough?
 Why do you need more help? It is a shame
 that we the living ask help from the dead.
 Tell me, what do you want? What do you yearn for?
 I never, ever saw you, my Vizier
 so pale and so shaken.
 You, who holds so many lives in your hand,
 you, who the city of Yannena with a glance can sink,
 and Arvanitia and Roumeli to your presence kneel,²
 and Agrafa tremble and break when you shout,
 Have you lost heart tonight? My Vizier, remember
 your terrifying powers. We call you the lion!

Ali

Tahir, I need no revenge, blood I need not;
 to kill I don't need your help.
 I forgot my sufferings, my foes,
 all these have left my mind. I swear,
 Tahir, that tonight I even forgot Souli,
 yes, Souli, which ripped me apart and drained my veins³
 incessantly sucking the blood from my heart,
 Souli, which shamed my white hair.
 Tonight I forgot Lambros Tzavellas,⁴
 whom if I saw slaughtered at my feet,
 and if any human power could give him
 life again, so that he can torture me again,
 I swear to my mother's soul, I would let him have it,
 if I could hope for one moment, Tahir.
 If I had to go back when I was poor
 and despised, scaling the mountains,
 Tahir, I tell no lie, I would do it, on my soul,
 if nature for one moment could grant me
 the beauty of spring, the smell of the roses,
 the moon's dress, the lemon tree's youth,
 If for a moment I could become again young, Tahir.
 Do you see, my child, what I am yearning for?
 You see, my power is not enough,
 Old age crushes me and bends me.

άσπρισε τὸ κεφάλι μου, τὰ χεῖλη μου ἀχνίσαν,
 ἐθόλωσαν τὰ μάτια μου, δὲ λάμπουνε σὰν πρῶτα.
 Κ' ἐν ῶ, κ' ἐν ῶ τὰ κόκκαλα ἀρχίζουν νὰ κουφώνουν,
 Ταχὴρ, φέρε τὸ χέρι σου, θέσε το στὴν καρδιά μου,
 ν' ἀκούσης πῶς οἱ χτύποι της, πῶς εἶν' ἀνδρειωμένοι.
 Βράζει τὸ αἷμά μου, Ταχὴρ, καὶ τώρα, ποῦ μ' ἀκούεις,
 αἰσθάνομαι πῶς δύναμαι ἀκόμη ν' ἀγαπήσω.
 Ἀλλά, μὲ βλέπουν γέροντα, μὲ σκαίζονται, μὲ τρέμουν,
 πέφτουν, φιλοῦν τὰ πόδια μου, τὰ μάτια δὲ σηκώνουν
 ποτὲ νὰ μὲ κυττάξουνε. Ἡ μάνα καὶ ὁ πατέρας
 εὐτυχισμένοι στέλλουνε σ' ἐμὲ τὴ θυγατέρα,
 γιὰ νὰ γλυτώσουν τὸ παιδί, μονάκριβ' ὅταν τῶχουν,
 κ' ἐγὼ γυρεύω τὸ φίλ ὡσὰν ἐλεημοσύνη,
 καὶ μοῦ τὸ δίνουνε ψυχρὸ, σκληρὰ συντροφεμμένο,
 ποῖός ξεύρει μὲ τί ἀσπλαχνη καὶ μυστικὴ κατάρρα.
 Ταχὴρ, ἂν μ' ἐκατάλαβες, ἂν ξμαθες τί θέλω,
 θεράπεψέ με· τὸ ζητῶ γιὰ χάρι, γιὰ ἐσπλαχνία.

Ταχὴρ

Βιζήρη μου, τώμολογῶ, δὲν ἤλπιζα ποτέ μου
 ν' ἀκούσω τῆς Ἀρβανιτιάς τὸ φοβερὸ λιοντάρι
 ν' ἀναστενάξῃ, νὰ θρηγῇ σὰν ἔρημη τρυγώνα.
 Πρόσταξε τὸ κεφάλι μου στὰ πόδια σου νὰ πέσῃ,
 ἀλλ' ἄκουσε, πατέρα μου, τὸ γέρο σου τὸ φίλο.
 Ἡ μάνα σου σ' ἐγέννησε καὶ σ' ἔρριξε στὸν κόσμον
 τὴν ὥρα, ποῦ κ' ἡ μάνα μου ἐγγέννησε κ' ἐμένα.
 Ἀντὶ νὰ γίνῃ ἕνας σεισμός, ἀντὶς ἡ γῆ ν' ἀνοίξῃ,
 ἀντὶ νὰ ληθῇ θανατικὸ, πλημμύρα, πείνα, φτώχεια,
 μιὰ δύναμις ἀνώτερη μᾶς ἔστειλ' ἐδῶ κάτω.
 Ἐσὸ ἐδιωρίστηκες νάσαι σπαθὶ κ' αἰθέρας,
 κ' ἐμένανε μ' εὐχήθηκε, Βιζήρη, νᾶμαι πάντα
 τοῦ φοβεροῦ σου τοῦ σπαθιοῦ πιστὴ φωλεῖα καὶ θήκη.
 Σαράντα χρόνους τρέχαμε· γιὰ κύτταξε, Βιζήρη,
 πόσα βουνὰ διαβήκαμε, πόσους κρημνοὺς καὶ βράχους!
 Ῥίξε τὰ μάτια ὀπίσω σου, πέρασε μὲ τὸ νοῦ σου
 ὅλα μᾶς τὰ πατήματα καὶ μέτρησε τοὺς τάφους...
 Τί κρίμα ποῦ δὲ φαίνονται! Καὶ ποῖος θημάται τώρα;
 Τὰ κόκκαλα καὶ τὰ κορμιὰ ἐλυώσανε, Βιζήρη.
 Τὸ χῶμα, ποῦ ὀλοφούσκωπο τὰ μνήματα πλακώνει,
 ὀλίγ' ὀλίγο χάνεται, γλυκὰ κατακαθίζει.

My head is white, my lips pale,
 my eyes do not shine as before.
 And while, while my bones hollow,
 Tahir, put your hand to feel
 how gallant is my heartbeat.
 My blood boils, Tahir, and now that you are listening to me
 I feel that I still have the power to love.
 But people see in me an old man
 they are afraid of me, they tremble,
 they kneel, kiss my feet,
 never raising their eyes to look at me.
 Mothers and fathers their beloved only daughter
 happily send to me,
 but when like alms her kiss I seek
 it is hardly affable, it is cold
 and who knows with what cruel and secret curse.
 Tahir, if you understand me, if you know what I need,
 find me the cure, do this for me, out of compassion.

Tahir

My Vizier, I confess that I never expected
 to hear the lion of Arvanitia, the terrifying lion
 to sigh, to mourn like a helpless dove.
 Order my head on your feet to fall,
 but listen, my father, to your old friend.
 Your mother bore you and cast you into this world
 the same time as mine did.
 Instead of an earthquake, instead of the earth opening wide,
 instead of death, famine, poverty, and flood,
 a higher power sent us here.
 You were destined to be sword and wind,
 and I was blessed, my Vizier, forever to be
 your terrifying sword's faithful holder and sheath.
 We are together for forty years. Think, Vizier,
 how many mountains we traversed, precipices and crags!
 Look back and recall
 all our steps and count the graves...
 What a pity they are concealed!
 The bones and bodies have wasted away, Vizier.
 The mounded earth that covers the graves,
 slowly disappears and gently settles;

ὕστερα φθάνει ἡ ἀνοιξη μὲ τὰ πολλὰ λουλούδια,
 μὲ τὰ χορτάρια τὰ χλωρά, μὲ γέλοια μὲ παιγνίδια,
 καὶ ἐκεῖ, ποῦ μαῦρο κ' ἔρημο τὸ φοινικὸ κοιμάται,
 παίζουν, χορεύουν τὰ παιδιά, λαλοῦνε τὰ πουλάκια.
 Τὰ αἵματα, ποῦ ἐχύσαμε, τὰ ρούφηξε τὸ χῶμα,
 τὰ ξέπλυνε τὸ σύγνεφο, τὰσβυσεν ἡ δροσοῦλα,
 καὶ τώρα ἐλησιμονήσαμε. Κάμμιά φορά τὴ νύχτα
 τὰ βλέπουμε στὸν ὕπνο μας, ἀλλὰ ποῖος τὰ φοβεῖται;
 Τὸ πρῶτο γλυκοχάραμμα τὰ σβεῖ, τὰ συνεπαίρνει.
 Ὁ μὴ φοβεῖσαι τοὺς νεκρούς, εἰν' ἤσυχοι οἱ καυμένοι.
 Ἔχουν τὸν ὕπνο τοὺς βαθύ, κοιμῶνται σὰν παιδάκια.*
 Για νὰ μπορέσης τοῦ Θεοῦ τὴ δύναμη ν' ἀρπάξης,
 καὶ ἀντίπαλός του ἀσπουνδὸς νὰ τὸνε πολεμήσης,
 ἐκεῖος νὰ δίνη τὴ ζωὴ καὶ σὺ νὰ τήνε παίρνῃς,
 πῶς ἔπρεπε νὰ πορευθῇς; Μ' ἐκείνη τὴν ἀγάπη,
 ποῦ νειὸς δὲν ἐπεθύμησες καὶ ... σήμερα γυρεύεις,
 ἤθελ' ἀκόμη σέρνεσαι στοῦ Ἑπελὲν τὴ φτώχεια.
 Θὰ κάθῃσο στὴ θύρα σου, τὸ χέρι σου ν' ἀπλώνῃς
 εἰς τὸ διαβάτη, ποῦ περνᾷ. Ἐμίσησες τὸν κόσμον,
 καὶ νὰ ποῦ τὸν ἐνίκησες. Ἀλλὰ μὴ λησιμονήσης.
 τὸ Σοῦλι μένει ζωντανό, κι ὁ Λάμπρος ὁ Τζαβέλλας.
 Θυμῆσου πῶς ἡ μάνα σου βαθεῖα μέσα στὸ χῶμα
 ἀνάπαυση δὲ θὰ ναύρῃ καὶ ὕπνο κ' ἡσυχία,
 ἀνίσως καὶ στὸ μνήμά της δὲ σφάξης τὸ Γαρδίκι.
 Βιζύρη, πές μου, τί ποθεῖς; ποῖα κόρη, ποῖα γυναῖκα
 δὲ σ' εἶδε, δὲ σ' ἐζήλεψε, δὲν ἦλθε στὸ πλευρό σου;
 Ποῖα μάνα μὲς στὰ Γιάννινα καὶ ποῖος, καὶ ποῖος πατέρας
 τολμᾷ σ' ἐσένα ν' ἀρνηθῇ τὰ κάλλη τοῦ παιδιοῦ του;
 Οἱ χρόνοι δὲ σ' ἐγέρασαν, τὸ χέρι σου δὲν τρέμει·
 εἶναι φωτιά τὰ χεῖλιά σου καὶ κεραυνὸς τὸ μάτι.
 Ποῖος εἶν' ἐκεῖνος, ποῦ θεωρεῖ τὴν κατάσπρη τὴ χήτη
 τοῦ Πίνδου τοῦ περήφανου καὶ γέροντα τὸν κράζει;
 Πές μου, τί θέλεις, πρόσταξε· τὸ χέρι μου, ἡ ψυχὴ μου
 εἶναι δικά σου. Ἄνοιξε στὸ φίλο τὴν καρδιά σου.

Ἄλῃς

Ταχῆρ, Ταχῆρ, μοῦ θυμήσες τὰ περασμένα χρόνια,
 τὸ δρόμο, ποῦ περάσαμε, τὰ μνήματα, τὸ αἷμα,
 καὶ σὰν καὶ νὰ ξανάνειωσα, ἐχάρηκε ἡ καρδιά μου.

then playful spring comes with many flowers,
 with green grass, with laughter,
 and there, where dark evil lies
 children play and dance and birds coo.
 The blood we spilled was swallowed by the earth,
 washed out by the rain, erased by the dew,
 but we have forgotten. Sometimes at night
 memories come to us in sleep, but who fears them?
 The sweet dawn erases them and takes them away.
 Ah! Don't be afraid of the dead, those quiet poor fellows.
 Like children, their sleep is deep.
 What should have been your course
 if you were to snatch God's power
 and fight Him as an implacable rival
 He giving life, you taking it away?
 The love that as youth you never yearned
 today unreservedly you seek
 to drag you into poverty,
 sitting by your door, begging from passersby.
 You nourished hatred for the world,
 and, yes, you conquered it. But forget not,
 Souli is still alive and Lambros Tzavellas as well.
 Remember that your mother who lies in the deep earth
 will find no rest unless you slaughter Gardiki on her grave.
 My Vizier, tell me for whom you lust?
 No youth, no woman saw you and resisted you.
 Who is the mother or the father in Yannena
 who dares to refuse to you the beauty of their daughter?
 Time has left no mark on you
 your hand is not trembling,
 fire shoots from your lips, thunder from your eyes.
 Who is he who gazes at proud Pindos's white peak
 and calls the mountain an old man?
 Tell me what you desire, order me; my hands, my soul
 are yours. Open up your heart to your friend.

Ali

Tahir, Tahir, you brought back the old times,
 the roads we marched, the graves, the blood,
 I feel again young, my heart rejoices.

Ταχρή, ἐσὺ μ' ἐγινώρισες. Δὲν ἦλθα ἐδῶ στὸν κόσμο,
για ν' ἀγαπήσω τοῦ Θεοῦ τὸ πλάσμα, τὴν εἰκόνα.
Ἄλλος Θεὸς μ' ἐγέννησε, μῶδεκε τὴν ψυχὴ του
καὶ μοῦπε καὶ μὲ δίδαξε πῶς ἡ ζωὴ ἡ δική μου
θὰ νάμαι μαύρος θάνατος καὶ κόλασι ἐδῶ κάτω.
Θυμοῦμαι ἀκόμη τῇ στιγμῇ, ποῦ ἡ μάνα μου μ' ἐπῆρε
κρυφά κρυφ' ἀπ' τὰ ἀδέρφια μου τὸ βράδυ σ' ἓνα μέρος.
ὅπου ἦσαν μνήματα πολλὰ καὶ ἀσπρίζαν στὸ φεγγάρι.
Ἀνάμεσά του ἔστεκε σιωπηλὸ, μονάχο,
ἓνα ψηλὸ, θεόρατο καὶ μαῦρο κυπαρίσσι.
Ἦ νύχτα ἦταν ἡσυχία, ἔλαμπε τὸ φεγγάρι,
καὶ κάπου κάπου ἀκούετο τὸ ρύασιμο τοῦ λύκου.
«Μάνα μου, λέγω, κύτταξε, τὰ γονατὰ μου τρέμουν,
τί μ' ἔφερες ἐδῶ νὰ ἰδῶ, πᾶμε φοβοῦμαι, μάνα».
Κ' ἐκείνη, ποῦ τὴν ἔτρεμεν ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ὁ ἔδης,
«Ἀλῆ, μοῦ λέγει, μὴ φοβοῦ σὰν ἦσαι μὲ τὴ Χάμκω.
Οἱ πεθαμμένοι δὲν ξυπνοῦν· καὶ ἀνίσως καὶ τὸ μῆμα
ξεράσῃ ἀπὸ τὰ στήθη του κανέναν κολασμένον,
φθάνει νὰ ἰδῇ πῶς εἶμ' ἐδῶ, τὸ χιλιτό μου νὰ νοιώσῃ
γίνεται στάκτη καὶ καπνὸς καὶ δυὸ φοραῖς πεθαίνει.
Ἄλῆ, παιδί μου, μὴ φοβοῦ, μὴ σκιάζεσαι τοὺς τάφους.
Τὰ κόκκαλα μέσα στὴ γῇ καὶ τὰ ψυχο τὸ κρέας
δὲν εἶναι παρ' ὁ ἄνθρωπος στῆς μάνας του τῇ μήτρα.
Τὸ σάβανο εἶναι σπάργανο, τὸ ξύλινο κιβώρι
εἶναι κουινὰ μικροῦ παιδιοῦ, ὅπου ποτὲ δὲ κλαίει.*
Ἄλῆ, παιδί μου, κύτταξε τὸ μαῦρο κυπαρίσσι,
κύτταξε καὶ τὰ μνήματα, ποῦ ἀσπροβολοῦν τριγύρω.
Βλέπεις, ὁ ἱσκιος του περνᾷ σὰν ἄλλος ὠροδείχτης
ἐπάνω ἀπὸ τὰ μάρμαρα, λές καὶ μετρά ταῖς ὥραις.
Στὸν κόσμο τώρα ποῦ θὰ ἐμβῇς, νὰ γίνῃς κυπαρίσσι
καὶ νὰ μετράς ταῖς ὥραις σου, τοὺς χρόνους, τὴ ζωὴ σου,
ἀπλόνοντας τὸν ἱσκιο σου στὰ μνήματα τὰ κρύα.

Tahir, you know me well. I did not come to this world
to love Christ's creatures or his image.
Another God created me and gave me his soul
and taught me that my life
will be black death and earthly hell.
I still remember the moment my mother took me
secretly from my brothers to a place
full of graves, white in the moon's light.
Among them stood a silent, solitary,
tall, colossal dark cypress.
The night was quiet, the moon shining,
and from time to time we could hear a wolf's cry.
"Mother," I said, "Look at my trembling legs,
what did you bring me here for?
I am afraid, Mother, let us go."
And she, the fear of heaven and hell told me:
"Ali, don't be scared when you are with Hamko.
The dead cannot wake up, and even if the grave
spits out a hell dweller from its breast,
he will be ash and smoke and will die again
when he sees that I am here and feels my breath.
Ali, my child, have no fear of the graves.
The bones and the soulless bodies in the tombs
are like humans inside wombs.
The shroud is swaddling, the wooden coffin
is a silent child's cradle.
Ali, my child, look at this dark cypress,
and the white gravestones around it.
You see, its shadow passes over them
like an hour hand counting time.
In the world that you will soon enter,
become a cypress and count the hours, your life,
by spreading your shadow on the chilly graves.

Καὶ κύτταξε, γλυκέ μου Ἀλῆ, ποτὲ μὴ λησμονήσης.
 Ἄν ἔλθῃ μέρα καὶ στιγμὴ, ποῦ ὁ μαυρὸς σου ὠροδείχτης
 δὲν εὕρῃ πλάκα νὰ σταθῇ τὴν ὥρα νὰ σοῦ δείξῃ,
 θυμήσου, Ἀλῆ, τὰ λόγια μου, ἡ μοῖρα θὰ σέ πάρῃ.
 Ἄλλο δὲν ἔχω νὰ σοῦ εἰπῶ. Ζώσου σπαθί, μαχαίρι,
 καὶ τρέχα, ἀνέβα τὰ βουνά. Ἐχε σιμά σου πάντα
 τὴ μητρικὴ μου τὴν εὐχὴ καὶ δὲ θὰ ν' ἀποστάσης».
 Ταχὴρ, ἐκεῖνη τὴ βραδεῖά ἐνίκησα τὸν κόσμον.
 Κ' ἐσὺ τὸ ξεῦρεις, φίλε μου, τὸ ξεῦρεις, σύντροφέ μου,
 ἂν ἐλθῇ σμάνῃ ποτὲ τῆς μάνας μου τὰ λόγια.
 Ὑψά για πρώτη μου φορά αἰσθάνομαι ἓνα πάθος,
 μιὰ δίψα ἀκατανόητη, Ταχὴρ, μιὰ τέτοια λαύρα,
 ποῦ ἂν ἤξευρα πῶς ἔφθανε γιὰ νὰ μοῦ τῆνε σβύσῃ
 τὸ αἷμα τῆς Ἀρβανιτιάς, τὸ αἷμα... τὸ δικό σου,
 ὅλο μὲ μιάς θὰ τῶπινα, Ταχὴρ, νὰ ἡσυχάσω.
 Τὸ μυστικὸ μου θὰ σοῦ εἰπῶ· ἀλλοίμονον σ' ἐσένα,
 ἂν ἴσως κι ἀπ' τὰ χεῖλι σου πέσῃ ποτὲ ἓνας λόγος.
 Ἰαχὴρ, Ταχὴρ, στὸ πρόσωπο, Ταχὴρ, μὴ μὲ κυττάξεις·
 τὸ λύκο τὸν ἀνήμερο, τὸ τρομερὸ λειοντάρι,
 τὸν ἄγριο τὸν Ἀλήπασα, τὸν κατατρῶγει ἡ ζήλεια.
 Ἡ ζήλεια! τὴν μολόγησα, σ' ἀνοῖξα τὴν καρδιά μου.
 Φέρε μου ἐδῶ τὸ δάχτυλο, μέτρησε τὴν πληγὴ μου.
 Ἀπόψε ὁ κόσμος νὰ χαθῇ, ὁ οὐρανὸς νὰ πέσῃ,
 ν' ἀνοίξῃ ἡ γῆ νὰ καταπιῇ κ' ἐμένανε κ' ἐσένα,
 ἀπόψε θέλω ἱατρικὸ!... Κάνενα δὲν ἔχω·
 ἐσὺ λυπήσου με, Ταχὴρ, ἐσὺ, πιστέ μου φίλε.

Ταχὴρ

Βιζήρη μου, Βιζήρη μου, ἄφες με νὰ φιλήσω
 τὸ δυνατὸ τὸ πόδι σου, τὴ γῆ, ποῦ σὲ βαστάει·
 ζήλεια σου καίει τὴν καρδιά, ζήλεια γλυκειὰ κι ἀγάπη!
 Καὶ λές πῶς εἶσαι γέροντας! Καὶ λές ὅτι τὰ χρόνια
 σ' ἀσπρίσανε, σ' ἐγείραναι! Εὐλογημένη ἡ ὥρα,
 ποῦ μ' ἀνοίξεις τὰ στήθη σου καὶ μῶδειξες, Βιζήρη,
 τὰνδρειωμένα σπλάχνα σου, ποῦ ἀκόμη λαχταρίζουν!
 Ζήλεια, τοῦ ἔρωτος πικρό, φαρμακερὸ στολίδι,
 σ' ἐσέ, Βιζήρη, θὰ γευῇ αἷμα, ψυχὴ καὶ νειότη,
 ἀπόψε ὁ κόσμος νὰ χαθῇ, ὁ οὐρανὸς νὰ πέσῃ,
 ν' ἀνοίξῃ ἡ γῆ νὰ καταπιῇ κ' ἐμέ καὶ τὰ παιδιὰ σου...

And look, my sweet Ali, never forget.
 If there comes a day, a moment
 when your dark hour hand
 finds no gravestone to pause at and show you the time,
 remember, Ali, my words, fate will claim you.
 I have nothing else to say. Gird yourself with knife and sword,
 and run, climb the mountains. Always keep with you
 my motherly blessings and you will prevail."
 Tahir, that night I conquered the world.
 And you, my comrade and friend, you know
 that I never forgot my mother's words.
 Now for the first time I feel a passion,
 an inconceivable thirst, Tahir, such fever,
 that if I knew that the blood of Arvanitia would quench it
 all at once I would drink, Tahir, to get relief.
 This is my secret; and may God have mercy on you
 if ever a word slips from your lips.
 Tahir, look me in the eye
 the untamed wolf, the dauntless lion,
 the ferocious Ali Pasha, is devoured by jealousy.
 There! I confessed, I opened my heart.
 Bring here your finger and feel my wound.
 Tonight the world will end, the sky will fall,
 the earth may swallow you and me,
 tonight I need a remedy!... I have nobody;
 pity me, Tahir, my true friend.

Tahir

My Vizier, my Vizier, let me kiss
 the earth that you step and your feet.
 Jealousy is burning your heart,
 sweet jealousy and love!
 And you say you are old!
 And you say that time made you hoar
 and bent you! Blessed be the moment
 you opened your heart to me, my Vizier, and showed me
 your brave heart that still longs for love!
 Jealousy is a bitter, poisonous jewel,
 but in you, my Vizier, will become blood, soul and youth,
 tonight the world will end, the sky will fall,
 the earth will open to swallow your children and me...

Άλῆς

Παιδιά μου; ... Ποιὸς σ' ἐρώτησε; πῶς σοῦλθανε στὴ μνήμη;
Ἐγώ, ποῦμαι πατέρας τους, ἐγὼ δὲν τὰ θυμοῦμαι,
καὶ σὺ πῶς τὰ μελέτησες; Τόση μεγάλη ἀγάπη
αἰσθάνεσαι γιὰ μένα, ὅπου, χωρὶς νὰ θέλῃς,
βλέπεις ἐμπρὸς σου τὸ Μουχτάρ καὶ τὸ Βελή, σὰν νᾶταν
τοῦ δένδρου, ποῦ σ' ἐσκέπασε, Ταχήρη, τὰ κλωνάρια;
καὶ στ' ὀνομά τους ὥρκισες κ' ἐφώνησες ν' ἀνοίξῃ
ἀπόψε ἡ γῆ νὰ καταπιῇ καὶ σὲ καὶ τὰ παιδιά μου ...
Ποιὸς ξεύρει; ... ἂν σ' ἐπρόσταζα ... ἂν ἤξευρες πῶς τώρα
ὅλη ἡ ζωὴ μου κρέμεται στὰ χέρια ... τὰ δικά σου.
Κι' ἂν σῶλεγαν πῶς γιὰ νὰ ἰδῇς τὸν ἀδελφοποιτό σου
τὸ γέρο τὸ Βιζήρη σου, Ταχήρη, τὸν Ἀλῆ σου
ν' ἀνασταθῇ νὰ ἱατρευθῇ μ' ἓνα ποτήρι αἷμα ...

Ταχήρ

Ἐκοβα τὸ λαρύγγι μου, ἔσφαξα τὸ παιδί μου,
γιὰ νὰ στὸ φέρω νὰ τὸ πιῇ, Βιζήρη μου, πατέρα.

Άλῆς

Στὴν ἀγκαλιά μου ἔλα ἐδῶ· ἐσ' εἶσαι τὸ παιδί μου.
Ἄκουσε τώρα τί θὰ εἰπῶ, μάθε ἀπὸ σὲ τί θέλω ...
Καθὼς ἀνθίζ' ἡ μυγδαλιά μὲ τὰ πολλὰ τὰ χιόνια
ἀνθίζε μὲς στὰ Ἰάννινα καὶ ἡ Κυρά Φροσύνη,
χρυσὴ ἀχτίδα φεγγαριοῦ στὰ σύννεφα κρυμμένη·
μιά μέρα τὴν ἀπάντησα. Ἐδιάβηκε σιμά μου
κ' ἐθάμβωσαν τὰ μάτια μου. Κρυφὴ ἀνατριχίλα
μ' ἔσφαξε μὲς στὰ κόκκαλα. Τὸ ἄτι μου τὴν εἶδε,
ἐστύλωσε τὰ πόδια του, ἐτέντωσε τὸ μάτι
κι ἀπλόνει, ἀπλόνει τὸ λαιμὸ γιὰ νὰ τὴ χαιρετήσῃ.
Ὁλόγυρά της ἔστεκαν σὰν ἄνθη, σὰν ἀστέρια,
σὰν ταῖς ῥανίδες τῆς δροσιάς στῆς κιτριᾶς τὸ φύλλο,
κόραις πολλαῖς. Ἐπαίζανε κ' ἐμάζοναν λουλούδια·
ἐσκιάχτηκανε τᾶλογο, σὰν ἄγρια περιστέρια
ἐπέταξαν, ἐκρύφτηκαν μὲς στῶν δενδρῶν τὸν ἴσκιο.
Τὸ ἄτι μου ἐχλημήτισε, ἀστροπελέκι ἐχάθη.

Ali

My children? ... Who asked you?
Why did you now think of them
and bring to your memory those
whom I, their father, have forgotten?
Is your love for me so deep that inadvertently
you see before you Mouchtar and Veli
as if they are branches of the tree that covers you.
And in their names you swore and shouted
for the earth to open and swallow my children and you ...
Well? ... If I ordered you ... If you knew
that my life hangs on your hands. ...
And if I told you that for your old Vizier
to rejuvenate, to heal with a cup of blood ...

Tahir

My throat I would slit, my child I would kill
to fetch the blood to you my father, my Vizier.

Ali

Let me embrace you, you are my child.
Listen now to what I will tell you, what I want from you. ...
As the almond tree blooms in a winter still with snow
so Lady Frossini blossomed in Yannena,
a golden ray from the moon, hidden by the clouds;
one day I met her. She passed by me
and dazzled my eyes. A secret shudder
cut me to the bone. The stallion in me saw her,
propped its feet and with taut eyes
extended its neck to greet her.
Around her stood like flower buds, like bright stars,
like dew drops on a lemon tree's leaf,
many young ladies, playfully collecting flowers.
The stallion scared them; like wild doves
they flew away and hid in the shadows of the trees.
And then the stallion neighed and disappeared like lightning.

Ἐπέρασε πολὺς καιρὸς καὶ πάντα στ' ὄνειρό μου
τὴν ἔβλεπα· τῆς ἄπλωνα τὰ χέρια νὰ τὴν πιάσω
καὶ μῶφευγε σὰν τὸν ἀφρὸ στὰ δάχτυλα τοῦ ναύτη,
ποῦ κινδυνεύει νὰ πιγῇ πιστεύοντας πῶς σφίγγει
τὴν ἀσπρη πέτρα τοῦ γιालοῦ, ποῦ θὰ τόνε γλυτώσῃ
Ἦλθε φωτιά καὶ πόλεμος· τὸ Σοῦλι φοβερίζει
νὰ καταπιῇ τὰ Γιάννινα· τὰ κλέφτικα τὰ βόλια
ἐσύριζαν μέσ στα Ἄγραφα· τοῦ Πίνδου τὰ τουφέκια
ἀστράφτουσε καὶ τὸν καπνὸ στὰ γένεια μου σκορποῦνε·
τὸ αἷμα, ἡ ἐκδίκηση, ὁ φόβος, ἡ ἐλπίδες
μ' ἔκαμεν κ' ἐλπισμόνησα. Δὲν ἔβλεπα στὸν ὕπνο
τὸ ὄνειρό μου τὸ γλυκὸ. Ἐχάθηκε ἡ Φροσύνη.
Εἶναι τρεῖς νύχτες ποῦ ἀγρυπνῶς τὴ βλέπω πάλ' ἐμπρὸς μου.
Ἦ σπῖθα μου ἔγινε φωτιά, μὲ καίει, μὲ φλογίζει.
Δὲν εἶμαι Ἀλῆς Τεπελενλῆς, δὲν εἶμαι υἱὸς τῆς Χάμκως,
ἀνίσως στὸ κρεβάτι μου δὲν τὴν ἰδῶ νὰ πέσῃ.
Στὸν ὕπνο μου γιὰ τρεῖς φορὰς τὴν εἶδα τὴν Φροσύνη,
θὰ ν' ἀληθέψῃ τὸνειρο, κι ἀπόψε θ' ἀληθέψῃ.
Ὁ πόλεμος ἡσύχασεν, ἔπαψε τὸ τουφέκι,
ἐγγύρσα στὰ Γιάννινα... τὸν ξεύρεις τὸ Δεσπότη;
Κάποιος θὰ τοῦ μαρτύρησεν τὴ μυστικὴ μου ἀγάπη,
κ' ἐκεῖνος τήνε πάντρεψεν. Ἐπίστεψε, τοῦ ἐφάνη
μὲ τρεῖς εὐχαῖς, ποῦ διάβασε, καὶ μὲ τὰ δύο στεφάνια,
μὲ τὸν καπνὸ τοῦ θυματοῦ καὶ μὲ τὰ δαχτυλίδια
πῶς ἀρπαξε ἀπ' τὰ νύχια μου τὸ πλάσμα τοῦ Θεοῦ του.
Παπά, μέσα στὰ Γιάννινα ἄλλος θεὸς δὲν εἶναι
παρ' ὁ Βιζύρης ὁ Ἀλῆς καὶ θὰ τὸ ἰδῇς μιά μέρα.
Τρεῖς χρόνοι τώρα ἐπέρασαν... κι ὁ Βάγιας ὁ Θανάσης
ἦλθε καὶ μοῦπε μυστικὰ πῶς ἡ κυρὰ Φροσύνη
παραίτησε τὸν ἀνδρα τῆς, τὰ δύο τῆς τὰ παιδάκια,
καὶ... κάποιον ἄλλον ἀγαπᾷ... Ταχὴρ, Ταχὴρ, βοήθεια...

Ταχὴρ

Ποῖνε, Βιζύρη; πές μου... ν' ἀκούσω τὸνομά του.

Ἀλῆς

Ταχὴρ, μὴ τρέμεις σὰν ἐμέ... Ταχὴρ, μὴ πρασινίζεις...
Εἴμεθα μόνοι... Τὸ Μουχτάρ... Καὶ πῶς; ἀνατριχιάζεις;
Ἐστιάχτηκες μὴ θὰ σοῦ πῶ νὰ τρέξῃς νὰ μοῦ φέρῃς
τὸ αἷμα, ποῦ προτῆτερα μῶταξες νὰ μοῦ δώσης;

A long time has passed but I always see her in my dreams;
opening my arms to catch her
but she slips away like the foam in a sailor's fingers,
who, thinking it is a white stone on the seashore,
holds onto it, himself from drowning to save.
Then, fire came and war. Souli was threatening
to swallow Yannena; Kleftes' bullets
in Agrafa were buzzing. The rifles of Pindos flashed⁵
and scattered smoke on my beard.
Blood, revenge, fear and hopes
made me forget her. My sweet dream stopped,
Frossini disappeared!
But for three nights now, sleepless I see her again.
The spark became fire, which inflames me and burns me!
I am not Ali Tepelenlis, I am not Hamko's child
if I do not see her lie in my bed!
I saw Frossini three times in my dream,
how real seemed the dream, and true tonight it shall be!
The war ended, the rifles ceased,
I came back... but the Bishop
of my secret love was told,
and he arranged for her to marry.
With blessings and two crowns,
and with the censor's fumes and rings
he thought he could snatch her away from me.
Damned priest! In Yannena there is no other god
but Ali, the Vizier, and one day you'll see!
Three years have passed since then...
Thanassis Vagias secretly to me confessed
that husband and children Frossini left
and... she loves someone else... Tahir, Tahir, help...

Tahir

Who, Vizier, tell me who? His name I want to know.

Ali

Tahir, do not tremble like me... Tahir, do not blanch...
We are alone... It is Mouchtar... Why are you shivering?
Are you afraid that I will order you
to run and fetch me the blood you promised?

Εσύ, τὸ ξεύρω, μ' ἀγαπᾷς ...δὲν ἔχεις ἄλλο φίλο,
βλέπεις, κ' ἐγώ, σὰν νᾶσουναι πνευματικός, θεός μου,
τὸ μυστικό μου σᾶδωκα. Τί τρέμεις; τί φοβείσαι; ...

Ταχὴρ

Βεζύρη μου, δὲ σκιάζομαι. Τί θέλεις; ...τὸ παιδί σου ...

Ἀλῆς

Νὰ ἦν' ἡ ὑστερή φορά π' ἀκούω τέτοιο λόγο
νὰ βγαίνει ἀπὸ τὸ στόμα σου. Ταχὴρ, ἀκούς τί λέγω;
Παιδί! ...Δὲν ἔχω ἐγὼ παιδιά, δὲν εἶμ' ἐγὼ πατέρας.
Ἡ θάλασσα τὰ κύματα παιδιά της θὰ τὰ κράξει,
γιατὶ τήνε ξεσχίζουνη καὶ τήνε μαρτυρεῖουν;
Καὶ τοῦραυτοῦ τὰ σύννεφα μποροῦνε ν' ἀγαπήσουν
τὸν κεραυνό, τὴν ἀστραπή, τὰ δίδυμα τὰ δέρφια,
τὰ σπλάχνα, ποῦ τὰ ἐγέννησαν, Ταχὴρ, γιατί φλογίζουν;
Παιδιά! Δὲν ἔχω ἐγὼ παιδιά. Ταχὴρ, ὅταν θυμοῦμαι
πῶς γιὰ νὰ δώσω τῇ ζωῇ, τὸ αἷμα καὶ τὴ σάρκα
εἰς τὸ Μουχτάρ καὶ τὸ Βελή, τὸ λύκο καὶ τὸ φεῖδι,
ἐπῆρ' ἀπὸ τῇ νιότη μου, ἐπῆρ' ἀπ' τὴν ψυχὴ μου
καὶ τὰ στεροῦμαι τώρα ἐγώ, τὰ χαίρουνται οἱ δύο τους·
ὅταν θυμοῦμαι ὅτ' ἐκλεψαν, Ταχὴρ τὴ δύναμή μου
καὶ τὴ φοροῦν αὐτοὶ γιὰ μέ, κ' ἐγὼ τήνε γυρεύω ...
Παιδιά! Δὲν ἔχω ἐγὼ παιδιά. Δὲν ἦλθα ἐδῶ στὸν κόσμον
νὰ πλάσω νέαις γενεαίς, μ' ἔστειλαν νὰ χαλάσω.
Εὐὸ τὸ ξεύρεις καὶ γιατί σὲ σκιάζουν τὰ παιδιά μου;
τὸ μυστικό μου τῶμαθες, γνωρίζεις τὸν ἐχθρό μου ...
Καὶ τώρα, ποῦμαι γέροντας, τώρα καὶ σὺ ποῦ βλέπεις
ὅτ' ἴσως ὑστερή φορά θὰ λάβω στὴ ζωὴ μου
εὐτυχισμένη μιὰ στιγμή, τώρα καὶ σὺ μ' ἀφίνεις; ...

Ταχὴρ

Βεζύρη, δὲν ἐφοβήθηκα ... Ἄν ἄγγισα γιὰ λίγο,
ἦτανε ... ἡ ἐκδίκηση. Πρόσταξε, θέλεις τώρα ...

Ἀλῆς

Ὅχι, Ταχὴρ, μὴ βιάζεσαι. Τὸ ξεύρεις, δὲ μ' ἀρᾷς
ἀδικο καὶ παράλογα νὰ ... πέφτω σ' ἁμαρτία.

24

I know that you love me ... You have no other friend.
And I, like to my spiritual god my secret to you revealed.
Why are you trembling? What do you fear?

Tahir

I am not scared, my Vizier.
What do you wish? ... Your offspring?

Ali

This will be the last time
such a word is uttered from your mouth Tahir.
Offspring! ... Children I have not, father I am not.
The sea may call its waves children
because they torture and rive her;
the clouds in the sky thunder and lightning can love
and the twin brothers the womb that gave them birth.
Children! Children I have not. When I know
that giving life, flesh and blood
to Veli and Mouchtar, the snake and the wolf,
came at the expense of my soul and youth.
Deprived I am of what they both now enjoy.
I know, Tahir, that they stole and donned my strength
while I search for it ...
Children! Children I have not.
To this world, I was sent to ruin
not to create new generations.
This much you know. Why then are you afraid of my children?
You learned my secret, you know my foe ...
And now that I am old, and now that you see
that this is my last chance to have a happy moment
would you abandon me now, too? ...

Tahir

Vizier, I was not scared ... If I hesitated a little,
it was ... the revenge. Order me, do you wish that ...

Ali

No, Tahir, don't be in haste. You know I dislike
needlessly to fall into sin.

25

Θά δώσω λόγο καὶ ψυχὴ σ' ἓνα Θεὸ μιὰ μέρα.
 Ἄκουσε. Τώρα θάλθῃ ἐδῶ, νὰ πάρῃ τὴν εὐχὴ μου
 ὁ υἱός μου ὁ Μουχτάρπασας. Αὐριο τόνε στέλλω
 νὰ πάῃ μακρὰ στὸν πόλεμο, π' ἀνάφτει στὰ Μπαλκάμια.
 Δέκα χιλιάδες τῶδωσα. Θ' ἀφήσῃ πρὶν χαράξῃ
 τὴ Φρόσω καὶ τὰ Γιάννινα. Τοῦ δίδω καὶ γιὰ φίλο,
 νὰ τοῖναι πάντα στὸ πλευρὸ σὰν ἄλλος του πατέρας,
 τὸν τρίτο μας τὸν ἀδελφὸ, τὸ Βάγια τὸ Θανάση.
 Τόνε γνωρίζω ἀπὸ παιδί, τὸ χέρι του δὲν τρέμει ...
 Ἐγὼ καὶ σὺ θὰ μείνωμε. Αὐριο τὸ φεγγάρι
 πρὶν ἔβγῃ ἐπάνω ἀπ' τὰ βουνά, Ταχέρη μου, θὰ πᾶμε
 οἱ δύο μας ἡσυχά, κρυφὰ ναῖροῦμε τὴ Φροσύνη.
 Θὰ πάγω ἐκεῖ, στὰ πόδια τῆς νὰ πέσω καὶ νὰ κλάψω,
 νὰ τῆς ζητήσω ἓνα φιλὶ, ἀγάπη κ' ἐσπλαχνία,
 τὰ πλούτη μου, τὴ δόξα μου, στὰ χέρια τῆς θ' ἀφήσω.
 Βασίλισσα, Σουλτάνα μου, Ταχέρη, θὰ τῆνε κάμω,
 νὰ τῆνε βλέπ' ἡ ἀνοιξὴ καὶ νὰ τῆνε ζηλεύῃ.
 Καὶ ἀν' ἀσπλαχνὴ τὰ δάκρυα μου, Ταχέρη, καταφρανέση,
 ἀν' δὲ θελήσῃ τὸ Μουχτάρ γιὰ μέ νὰ λησμονήσῃ.
 ὦ τότε, φίλε μου πιστέ, θαύρης ἐσὺ τὸν τρόπο
 νὰ πλύνῃς τὴν αἰσχύνῃ μου. Βρίσκεις νερὸ στὴ λίμνη,
 σὰν τὴ δροσοῦλα καθαρὸ ... Εἶναι βουβὸ τὸ κύμα,
 καὶ ὅταν μουνγκρίζῃ στὸ γαλὸ, ὁ κόσμος δὲ γνωρίζει
 ἀν' ἦναι θρήνος ἢ βοή, ἀν' ἦναι μοιρολόγι ...
 Σῦρε νὰ κράξῃς τὸ Μουχτάρ. Ἐδῶ σὰν ἔλθῃ ἐμπρὸς μου,
 στάσου στὴ θύρα ἀκίνητος. Κι ἀνίσως καταλάβῃς
 ἀπὸ μιὰ μόνῃ του ματιά, ἀπὸ μιὰ μόνῃ λέξῃ
 ὅτι ἔμαθε τὸ μυστικὸ ... Ταχέρη, ἐσὺ τὸ ξεύρεις.
 δὲν εἶν' ὁ Ἄλῃς ἀχάριστος ... Ἄν' μούτανε γραμμένον
 ἀπὸψ' ἐδῶ νὰ στερηθῶ, ἓνα παιδί νὰ κλάψω ...
 Ἐσὲ θὰ πάρω γιὰ παιδί, ἐσένα θ' ἀγκαλιάσω.
 Σῦρε, Ταχέρη, στὰ χέρια σου εἶν' ὅλαις μου ἡ ἐλπίδες ...
 Ταχέρη, Ταχέρη, λησμονήσα ... Πῶς δὲ φορεῖς ἀπόψε
 οὔτε μαχαῖρι οὔτε σπαθί; Χίλιαις φοραῖς σοῦ τῶπα
 νὰ τάχῃς πάντα συντροφιά ... Εἶναι κακὸς ὁ κόσμος.
 Ἐπειτα τῶχ' σ' ἐντροπὴ νὰ βλέπω τὸ λουντάρι,
 ποῦ πάντα στέκει ἀγρυπνῶ σιμά μου, στὸ πλευρὸ μου,
 νὰ μὴ δείχνῃ τὰ δόντια του, τὰ φοβερά του νύχια ...
 Πάρε, Ταχέρη, γι' ἀγάπῃ μου, πάρε νὰ μὲ θυμάσαι.

Some day I will render account and soul to a God.
 Listen! My son, Mouchtar, will soon come
 my blessing to receive. Tomorrow I am sending him
 to war at Balkamia. Ten thousand will follow him.⁶
 Before dawn Yannena and Frossini he will leave.
 Our brother Vagias along with him I send
 like a true father by his side to be.
 I know Vagias since he was young
 he is not a trembling hand. ...
 You and I will stay. Tomorrow, and before the moon
 over the mountains appears, my Tahir, we shall go
 the two of us quietly and covertly to find Frossini.
 I shall go to her and fall at her feet
 and cry and beg for love, compassion and a kiss,
 my riches, my fame I shall bestow in her hands.
 I shall make her my Sultana, my Queen,
 the envy of spring.
 And if cruelly my tears she scorns, Tahir,
 if she refuses to forget Mouchtar for me,
 oh! then, my loyal friend you'll find the way
 to wash out my shame, with water from the lake
 clean like a morning's dew ... The waves are silent,
 but when they bellow by the shore,
 people don't know if it's lament, mourning or roar ...
 Go and call Mouchtar. When before me he stands,
 stay still by the doors. And if you sense
 from one glance, from one word
 that he knows the secret ... Tahir, you know
 Ali is not ungrateful ... If it were written in my fate
 today to cry for and be deprived of a child ...
 I will embrace you, I'll take you as mine.
 Go, Tahir, all my hopes lie in your hands ...
 Tahir, Tahir I forgot ... Why have you
 no dagger, no sword with you tonight?
 I urged you a thousand times
 always to carry them, it's a sinister world.
 It's a shame to see my vigilant lion
 with no claws and fearful teeth ...
 Take this Tahir, a token of my love, to remember me.

Είναι μικρό το χάρισμα... Ποιος ξέρει, το μαχαίρι,
που τώρα από τη μέση μου βγαίνει, για να στολίση
τάνδρειωμένα στήθη σου, ποιος ξέρει πόση δόξα,
ἀγαπημένε μου Ταχέρ, το καρτερεί στον κόσμο!
Σύρε να κράξης το Μουχτάρ, σύρε με την εὐχή μου.

Σκύφτει ὁ Ταχέρ τὸ μέτωπο, ἀχνὸς σὰν πεθαμένος,
φιλεῖ τὸ χέρι τοῦ Ἀλή καὶ παίρνει τὸ μαχαίρι.
Ἐμεινε μόνος ὁ φονεὶας. Πικρά χαμογελώντας
ἐκύτταξε τὸ φίλο του, ποὺ φεύγοντας γυρίζει
νὰ προσκυνήσῃ τρεῖς φορὰς τὸν ἀδελφοποιτό του.

Ἐπάνω κάτω ἀνήσυχος σὰν τίγρις πεινασμένη,
ποὺ καρτερεῖ τὸ θῦμά της, πατεῖ καὶ παραδέρνει.
Ῥίχνει στὸ χέρι τάρματα. Τὰ δυὸ του τὰ πιστόλια.
Ἦσαν γεμάτα ἔτοιμα. Τραβᾷ τὸ γιαταγάνι,
γλιστρᾷ σὰ φεῖδι, ἀνέμποδα προβαίνει ἀπὸ τὴ θήκη.
Τὸ πάθος, ἡ ἐκδίκησι, τὸν πνίγει, τὸν τυφλώνει.
Ἄνοιξε τὸ παράθυρο, λαίμαργα καταπίνει
τὸ ἀγεράκι τῆς νυχτός, ποὺ ἄθωο, δὲ γνωρίζει
πὺς τέτοια στήθη τὸμμελλε, τὸ μαῦρο, νὰ δροσίση.
Ἐσήκωσε τὸ μέτωπο. Τὸν οὐρανὸ σκεπάζουν
βαρὺν, πυκνὰ τὰ σύγνεφα. Λές κ' ἐκλείσει τὰ μάτια
νὰ μὴ τὸν διῇ στὸ πρόσωπο καὶ νὰ μὴ τὸν ἀκούσῃ...

Ἀλὴς (μόνος)

Δὲν ἔχεις θάρρος νὰ μὲ ἰδῇς ἐσύ, ὅποιος κι ἂν ᾖσαι.
Τὰ γαλανὰ τὰ μάτια σου σκέπασε, κρύψε, κλείσε.
Πάρε τὰ μαῦρα σύγνεφα, κάμε τα βλέφαρά σου
τὸν κεραυνό, τὴν ἀστραπὴ δείξέ μου στὰ πλευρά σου.
Ὁμίλησε μου μὲ βρονταῖς, σεισμούς, ἀνεμοζάλη·
τὸ βλέπεις, δὲ σὲ σκιάζομαι, δὲ γέρνω τὸ κεφάλι.
Σ' ἔκραξα, σ' ἐβλασφήμησα. Ἄν εἶσαι σὺ Θεός μου,
ἔλα μιὰ νύχτα ἐμπρός μου.

A small present... Who knows, this dagger
that instead of my waist will now adorn your chest
who knows, my beloved Tahir, what glory awaits it!
With my blessings go, call Mouchtar.

Tahir, pale as death, bows his forehead,
kisses Ali's hand, and takes the dagger.
Alone, smiling bitterly, the murderer is left,
gloating at his friend, who, leaving,
thrice turned to bow before his brother.

Like the hungry tiger awaiting her victim
alone in the room he paces and wanders.
He inspects the weapons, his loaded pistols,
he draws the yataghan,
which like a snake freely slips from its sheath.
The passion, the revenge blinds him, drowns him.
He opens the window to greedily gulp down
the air of the night, which is innocent and doesn't know
what a sinister chest is destined to refresh.
He raises his forehead. With clouds heavy and dense
the sky shut its eyes
to avoid his words, to avoid his sight...

Ali (alone)

You have no courage to look at me, whoever you are.
Cover, close, and hide your blue eyes.
Take the dark clouds, make them your eyelids,
show me your thunder, your lightning.
Talk to me with rumbles, earthquakes and tornados.
You see, I do not fear you, I don't bow my head to you.
I called you, I insulted you. If you are my God
some night show yourself before me!

Τῇ δυνάμει μου δὲ χρωστώ στή μοῖρα, σὲ κάνένα.
Μὲ πλάσανε τὰ χέρια μου. Δὲν εἶμαι σὰν ἐσένα,
ποῦ εὐρέθηκες μονάχος σου χωρὶς ἐχθροὺς στή φύσι.
Κ' ἓνα παιδάκι ἐδύνατο εὐκόλα νὰ νικήσῃ
τὸ χάος καὶ τὴν ἀψυχὴ τὴν ὕλη, ποῦ ἐκοιμάτο,
καὶ πεθαμμένη κι ἀνεργὴ ἐδῶ κ' ἐκεῖ ἐπλανάτο.
Ἄν εἶσαι ἀλήθεια δυνάτος, χάλασε αὐτὴν τὴν πλάσι,
γιατί θὰ σὲ χαλάσῃ.

Καταίβα ἐδῶ, σὲ καρτερῶ. Πάρε γιὰ σύμμαχόν σου,
ἂν θέλῃς τὸ μονάκριβο τὸ πλάσμα τῶν χειρῶν σου,
τὸ Θάνατο, τὸ τέκνο σου, τὸ μόνο καύχημά σου,
καὶ τρέξ' ἐδῶ στὰ Γιάννινα, δεῖξέ μου τὴν ἀνδρεία σου.
Γιατί, γιατί μὲ πολεμεῖς κρυμμένος στὸν αἰθέρα
καὶ λίγο λίγο τὴ ζωὴ μου κλέφτεις κάθε μέρα,
καὶ τρῶς τὴν ἀνθρωπότητα καὶ τρέφεις μὲ μαΐναν
δειλὴν ἀθανασία;

Ἄν εἶσαι παντοδύναμος, γιατί νὰ μὴ θελήσῃς
τὸ σπόρο, ποῦ μ' ἐγέννησε, στή μήτρα ν' ἀφανίσῃς;
Γιατί τὴ σπίθα, πῶμελλε τὸν κόσμο σου νὰ κάψῃ,
ἀκόμη δὲν τὴν ἐσβυσες; Γιατί, προτοῦ ν' ἀνάψῃ,
μ' αὐτὴν ἐκείνην τὴν πνοή, ποῦ σῶφυγε ἀπ' τὰ χεῖλη
τὴν ὥρα, ποῦ ἐζωντάνευσε στὰ χέρια σου τὴν ὕλη,
γιατί δὲν τὴν ἐφύσησες; Πές μου το, τί σοῦ φταίω,
ἂν τώρα ἐγὼ σὲ καίω;

Πολλοὶ δὲ σὲ πιστεύουνε, τὴν ὑπαρξί σου ἀρνοῦνται,
γιὰ νὰ μὴ σ' ἔχουν ἔμποδο, δειλοί, νὰ μὴ φοβοῦνται.
Ἐγὼ ὁ Ἄλῃς σ' ἐπίστειψα, γιὰ νὰ σὲ πολεμήσω.
Τὸ βλέπεις πόσους σάρπαξα! Τὸ βλέφαρό νὰ κλείσω,
χιλιάδες πέφτουνε στή γῇ ἐμπρός στή δυνάμει μου,
κ' ἐσένα σ' ἐλησμόνησαν, λατρεύουν τὸ σπαθί μου.
Πάρε μου τὰ γεράματα, δώσέ με τὴ ζωὴ σου
κ' ἔλα μ' ἐμὲ μετρήσου.

Μέσα στὸ μνήμα καρτερεῖς νάλῃς νὰ μὲ παιδέψῃς!
Δὲ σὲ φοβοῦμαι οὐτ' ἐκεῖ· τὴ φύσι ν' ἀνατρέψῃς
γιὰ τὸν Ἄλῃ δὲ δύνασαι. Τὴ γῇ γιὰ παλλακίδα
θὰ πάρω στὸ κρεβάτι μου· κι ἀπόκρυφὴ ἐλπίδα
μου λέγει ἀπὸ τὴ σάρκα μου πῶς θάβγῃ, θὰ φυτρώσῃ
πικρὴ χολὴ τὸν κόσμο σου κ' ἐκεῖ νὰ φαρμακώσῃ.

I owe my power to no fate, to no one.
My hands created me. Like you I am not.
You were in the universe alone
without foes. Even a child, small and weak,
the chaos and the sleeping soulless matter
wandering lifeless and dead, could easily beat.
If you are truly powerful, destroy the universe
or it will destroy you.

Come down, I am waiting for you. And if you want,
take for ally the only creature of yours,
Death, your son, your only pride.
And hasten here to Yannaena, to show me your valor.
Why, why, do you fight me hiding in the air
and everyday slowly my life you steal
and devour mankind and rabidly nourish
a timid immortality?

If you are omnipotent why didn't you
destroy in the womb the seed that caused me?
Why haven't you still put out the spark
destined to burn your world?
Why, before it flared up,
did you not smother my spark
with the breath that gave life to matter?
Tell me! Am I to blame if I now burn you?

Many don't believe in you; your existence they dispute,
to them you are no obstacle no source of fear.
But I, Alí, believed in you just to fight you.
You know how many I've snatched from you!
With the blink of an eye thousands before my power kneel,
they forget you and worship my sword.
Take away my hoary old age, give me your life
and come match your strength with mine.

To torment me you await inside my tomb!
Even in there I have no fear of you;
turn the cosmos upside down, you can't beat Alí.
My mistress in bed the earth will be; and a secret hope
tells me that from my flesh shall rise and take root
bitter bile to poison your world.

κι ἀθάνατος θὰ νὰ γενῶ, θὰ μ' ἔχῃς πάντα ἐμπρός σου
σκοτάδι μὲς στὸ φῶς σου.

Κ' ἐκεῖ, ποῦ ἡ ἀχτίδες σου ἀπὸ ψηλά θὰ βρέχουν
ζωὴ κι ἀγάπη στὰ φυτὰ, πάντα μαζί θὰ μ' ἔχουν.
Κρυφός, αἰώνιος ἐχθρός, μαύρη φθορά καὶ σήψις
καὶ θάνατος παράκαιρος ἐκεῖ, ποῦ θὰ μὲ κρύψῃς.
Τὰ ῥόδα πρὶν ν' ἀνθίζουνε, θὰ φθείρω, θὰ μαραίνω,
τὴν εὐμορφιά, τὴ δύναμι θὰ τρώγω νὰ χορταίνω.
Τὸ βλέπεις ἂν σὲ σκιάζομαι. Καὶ ζῶν καὶ πεθαμμένος
θὰ νάμαι ἀνδρειωμένος.

Ἀπόψε, τὸ ἀπεφάσισα, ἀπόψε θὰ σοῦ δείξω
πῶς κάθε ἀγάπη ἀνθρώπινη ἔχω νὰ καταπνίξω.
Πατέρας σὰν ἐσένανε ἔπλασα τὰ παιδιὰ μου,
καὶ τώρα, ποῦ τὸ θέλησα, θὰ φάω τὰ σωθικά μου.
"Ἄν μῶδωκες τὸν ἔρωτα γιὰ νὰ μὲ μαρτυρέψῃς,
καρτέρεψε καὶ θὰ μὲ ἰδῇς καὶ τότε θὰ πιστέψῃς.
Δὲ σοῦ ζητῶ βοήθεια, δὲ θέλω ἐλεημοσύνη.
θάρπάξω τὴ Φροσύνη! ...

Μουχτάρ

Φροσύνη! . . . "Ἀχ! τί ὄνομα! Πατέρα μου, Βιζύρη!

Ἄλῃς

Καλῶς το τὸ παιδάκι μου. Πῶς ἄργησες, Μουχτάρ! ...

Καὶ πράσιнос σὰν τὴν ὀχιά ὁ ἄθεος ἐκεῖνος
μὲ μιὰ βλασφήμια, πῶμεινε κρυμμένη στὸ λαρύγγι,
ἔφτυσε κατὰ πρόσωπο τὸν οὐρανὸ καὶ τὰς τρεῖς.
Ἀκούμβησε τὸ χέρι του σιγὰ στὸ γιαταγάνι
κι ἀτάραχος ξαπλώθηκε στοῦ λιουταριῶν τὸ δέριμα.
Ἐμπρός του στέκετ' ὁ Μουχτάρ καὶ καρτερεῖ ν' ἀκούσῃ
σὰ λείψανο, σὰ μάρμαρο τὰ λόγια τοῦ Βεζύρη.

I shall become immortal, before you ever present,
darkness in your light.

And when your heavenly rays shower
the flowers with life and love, there I'll always be.
Latent, perpetual foe, black waste, and decay,
me, the hidden untimely death, where will you hide me?
Before the roses blossom their beauty I will waste and wilt.
This power will nourish me and fill me.
You see I am not scared of you. Alive or dead
valiant I shall be.

Tonight I decided, tonight I will show you
that I can suppress any human love.
Like you, as father, I created my children,
and now I decided to destroy my seed.
If you brought love to me to torment me
wait to see my power and then you shall see . . .
I don't ask for help, I don't want alms,
I shall take Frossini! . . .

Mouchtar

Frossini! . . . Oh! What a name! My father, Vizier!

Ali

Welcome, my child. Why are you late, Mouchtar? ...

Green like the viper the infidel
with a blasphemy hidden in his mouth,
spat on the face of the sky and the stars.
He slowly rested his hand on the yataghan
and calmly laid down on the lion's skin.
Before him stands Mouchtar, like a corpse,
a statue, waiting to hear the Vizier's words.

Βλέπεις πῶς με κατάντησαν, Μουχτάρ, τὰ γερατεῖα!
Μὴ με ξεσυνερίζεσαι. Τὰ φύλλ' ἀπὸ τὸ δένδρο,
ποῦ ἐσκέπαζε τὴ 'Ρούμελη με τὸν πλατὺ τὸν ἴσκιό,
τὰ βλέπεις, ἐκιτρίνισαν, πρῶτος βορείας τὰ ρίχνει.
Ἐσὺ εἶσαι τὸ βλαστάρι μου. Ὅση ζωὴ κι' ἂν εἶχα,
τὴν ἔβριξα στὰ στήθη σου. Ὁ Πλάστης μ' ἐσπλαχνίσθη
καὶ μᾶδωκε τὴ χάρι του καὶ μ' ἄφηκε νὰ ζήσω,
νὰ ἰδῶ καλὰ γεράματα. Εὐχαριστῶ σε, Θεέ μου!
Πάρε, παιδί μου, τὴν εὐχή, ποῦ κλαίνοντας σοῦ δίνω,
καὶ τρέξε, τρέξε γρήγορα, Μουχτάρ, νὰ πολεμήσης.
Θυμήσου τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὰσπρα του τὰ γένεια.
Νάρχωντ' ἀπὸ τὸ Δούναβι πουλιὰ νὰ τραγουδοῦνε
τοῦ υἱοῦ μου τὴν παλληκαριά, κ' ἐγὼ νὰ ξαναιώνω,
ν' ἀκούω πάντα τὸ Μουχτάρ μέσ στὴ φωτιά σὰ Χάρος,
σπαθί, μαχαίρι δίστομο ν' ἀστράφτη, νὰ θερίζῃ
σύρε, Μουχτάρ, καὶ γύρισε ἐδῶ στὴν ἀγκαλιά μου
καὶ μὴ μ' ἀφήσης ἔρημο στὴν ὥρα τὴ στεριή μου.
Θέλω μ' αὐτὰ τὰ χέρια σου τὸ λάκκο νὰ μοῦ σκάψης ...
Καὶ γράφε μου συχνά, συχνά, καὶ μὴ με λησμονήσης.
Παιδί μου, πές μου ἐλευθερά, τί θέλεις ἀπὸ μένα; ...

Κ' ἔκλαιγε ὁ ἀλιτήριος, γιατί' ἦτανε γραμμένο
κι' αὐτὰ, κι' αὐτὰ τὰ δάκρυα, τὸ αἷμα τῆς ψυχῆς μας.
πικρὸς στὰ μάτια τοῦ Ἀλῆ περίγελως νὰ γίνουν
καὶ τὰ βλεπες νὰ στάζουνε ἀπ' τὰ λευκά του γένεια
καὶ νὰ κυλοῦν, νὰ κρύβονται σ' τοῦ μαχαίριου τὴ θήκη.

Μουχτάρ

Βιζύρη μου, πατέρα μου, μὴν κλαῖς καὶ μὴ δειλιάζης.
Ἐσὺ τὸ ξεύρεις ἂν ποτὲ ἐπέστρεψα ἀπ' τὴ μάχη
κ' ἐντράπηκα σ' τὸ πρόσωπο νάλθω νὰ σέ κυττάξω.
Πατέρα μου, εἶσαι γέροντας, ἄφες με στὸ πλευρό σου,
πιστὸς νὰ μείνω σύντροφος. Στείλε τὸν ἀδελφό μου.

See, Mouchtar, to what old age has reduced me!
Don't be hard on me. You see how the leaves from the trees
that covered Roumeli with thick shadow,
are yellow, falling with the first north wind.
You are my young shoot. All the life I had,
I threw it in your heart. The Creator pitied me
and gave me his grace, let me live,
good old age to reach. Thank you, my God!
Take, my child, the blessing that I tearfully give you,
and run, run fast to fight, Mouchtar.
Remember your father and his white hair.
From Danube birds will be coming to sing
of my son's bravery, restoring my youth;
hearing that Mouchtar is the fire, like Death,
with sword and shining two-edged dagger
go, Mouchtar, and come back here to my arms
do not leave me lonely in my final hours.
I want your two hands to dig my grave ...
And write frequently, do not forget me.
My child, speak freely, what do you wish from me? ...

And the rascal was crying, because it was written
that these tears, the blood of our souls,
will become in his eyes a bitter laughing-stock.
You could see them dropping from his white beard
rolling down and hiding in his dagger's sheath.

Mouchtar

My Vizier, my father, do not cry, have no fear.
You know I never came back from war
ashamed to look you in the face.
My father, you are an old man, by your side let me be
your loyal comrade. Send my brother.

Άλῆς

Γέροντας! ... Ποιόνε τὸ Βελή; ... Ἀνάθεμα τὴν ὥρα,
ποῦ ἡ μάνα σου τὸν ἔκαμε! ... Θεέ μου, σχώρεσέ την!
Θέλεις, Μουχτάρ, νὰ ἐντροπιασθῶ, νάρχωνται νὰ μοῦ λένε
πῶς τὸ παιδί τ' Ἀλήπασα, σὰν ἄκουσε τὸν κρότο
καὶ τὴ φωτιά τοῦ τουφεκιοῦ, ἀχνὸ καὶ λιγωμένο
ἐκρύφτηκε γιὰ νὰ σωθῇ στοῦ χαρεμιοῦ τὸν κόρφο;
Ἄν μ' ἀγαπᾷς, λυπήσου με. Μὴ τότε μελετήσης.

Μουχτάρ

Τὸ θέλημά σου ἂς γεινῇ, πατέρα μου, πηγαίνω.
Μιά χάρι μόνον ἀπὸ σέ, μιὰ μόνη χάρι θέλω.
Ἀφήνω ἐδῶ στὰ Γιάννινα, πατέρα, τὴν καρδιά μου.
Μὴ πικραθῆς, ἂν σῶκρυψα τὸ μυστικὸ μου ὡς τώρα.
Πατέρα μου, ἂν μ' ἀγαπᾷς, σὰν νάταν θυγατέρα,
στὴν ἀγκαλιά σου φύλαξε τὴ μαύρη τὴ Φροσύνη ...

Άλῆς

Μουχτάρ, τῶχα παράπονο ποτὲ νὰ μὴ σ' ἀκούσω
οὐτ' ἓνα λόγο νὰ μοῦ πῆς γιὰ αὐτὴ σου τὴν ἀγάπη.
Σύρε, παιδί μου, σ' τὸ καλὸ, βαρύγυμνο δὲ σῶχω.
Μὰ τὰ σκληρὰ μεσάνυχτα, ὅπου μᾶς παραστέκουν,
ὀρκίζω ἐδῶ σ' τὰ σπλάχνα μου, ἐδῶ μὲς στὴν καρδιά μου
σὰν νάτανε σταλαματιά, Μουχτάρ, τοῦ αἵματός μου,
γι' ἀγάπη σου πιστὰ πιστὰ νὰ σοῦ τήνε φυλάξω.
Ὀρκίζω μὲς σ' τὰ μάτια μου, παιδί μου, νὰ τὴν κρύψω
σὰν ἓνα δάκρυ μυστικὸ, νὰ μὴ τὴ δῇ κανένας.
κι ὅποια κι ἂν μ' ἐβρῇ δυστυχία, ποτέ μου δὲ θὰ κλάψω,
μὴ τύχη καὶ τὸ δάκρυ μου ἄθελα μοῦ ξεφύγῃ.
Σύρε, παιδί μου, κ' εἰν' ἀργά! Ἐλα νὰ σέ φιλήσω.
Θυμήσου τὸν πατέρα σου ... Σύρε μὲ τὴν εὐχή μου!
Ἐσμίξανε τὰ χεῖλη τους οἱ ἀπιστ' οἱ φονεῖδες,
καὶ τὸ φιλᾷ τ' Ἀλήπασα σ' τὸ στόμα τοῦ παιδιοῦ του
εἶναι μιὰ μύτη μαχαιριοῦ καὶ μᾶς ὀχιάς τὸ δόντι.
Φεύγ' ὁ Ταχέρης κι' ὁ Μουχτάρ, μένει ὁ Βιζύρης μόνος.
Χαρούμενος, ποῦ ἐνίκησε, ἀπλόνεται στὸ στρώμα
καὶ γιὰ νὰ δώσῃ μιὰ στερνὴ βλασφήμια τοῦ Χριστοῦ μας.

Ali

Old man? ... Send Veli? ... Cursed be the hour
your mother bore him! ... God, forgive her!
Mouchtar, do you want me to be shamed?
People to rumor that Ali's son,
hearing the din and roar of battle,
paled and swooned to save himself
in the harem's breast he hid?
If you love me, pity me. Do not mention him.

Mouchtar

Father, your wish will be fulfilled, I'll go.
From you one favor only I seek.
Behind, in Yannena, my heart I leave.
Don't be bitter that until now a secret I hid.
My father, if you love me, in your arms
like your daughter, guard poor Frossini ...

Ali

Mouchtar, it weighed on me that I never heard
one word from you about this love of yours.
Go, my child, Godspeed.
Let this hard midnight be the witness.
I swear to faithfully protect her
as if she were, Mouchtar, drop of my blood,
and for love of you, I'll keep her deep in my heart.
I swear, my child, that inside my eyes I will hide her
like a secret tear that nobody can see.
And even in misfortunes I will never cry,
in fear that the tear escapes.
Go, my child, it is late! Come let me kiss you.
Remember your father ... Go with my blessings!
The infidel murderers joined their lips,
on his child's mouth Ali's kiss
is a viper's tooth, a dagger's tip.
Mouchtar and Tahir leave, Vizier is now alone.
On the bed he stretches, joyful, that he won,
and as a final blasphemy to Christ

χαμογελῶντας τρεῖς φορές ἔκαμε τὸ σταυρὸ του
καὶ βγάνει ἀπὸ τὸν κόρφο του μ' ἀγάπη καὶ μὲ φόβο
ἓνα πιστό του φυλαχτὸ καὶ τὸ φιλεῖ καὶ πέφτει.
Σὲ λίγο ἀποκοιμήθηκε. Ἀνάσανε κι ὁ κόσμος,
ἐχάθησαν τὰ σύννεφα, ἔλαμψε τὸ φεγγάρι...
Λές καὶ γιορτάζει ὁ οὐρανὸς τὸν ὕπνο τοῦ ἐχθροῦ του.

§

ΑΣΜΑ ΔΕΥΤΕΡΟΝ Η ΜΕΤΑΝΟΙΑ

Κρυφὰ τὸ γλυκοχάραγμα προβαίνει ἀπὸ τὸν Πίνδο
βαντίζοντας μὲ τὴ δροσιὰ τὸ κάθε πάτημά του.
Κοιμάται ἡ λίμνη ἀτάραχη, καὶ σ' τοῦ γιγαλοῦ τὴν ἄκρη
ἀκούεται γλυκὰ γλυκὰ λίγος ἀφρὸς νὰ παίξει,
σάν ἥσυχος ἀνασασμὸς μικροῦ παιδιοῦ σ' τὸν ὕπνο.
Κάποτ' ἐδιάβαινε τρελλό, χαροῦμένο τ' ἀγέρι
καὶ μὲ τ' ἀθῶα του φτερά γλιστρᾷ σ' τὴ λίμνη ἐπάνω
καὶ παίζει καὶ δροσίζεται κ' ἓνα φιλὶ τῆς παίρνει,
κ' ἐκείνη, πούναι ἐντροπαλή, τὸ μέτωπο ζαρόνει
καὶ σκυθρωπάζει μὴ στιγμὴ καὶ τ' ἀγεράκι φευγεῖ.
Σηκώνεται, σηκώνεται, λευκὴ λευκὴ σὰ χιόνι,
ἡ καταχνιά, ποῦ ἐπάνω τῆς ἀπλώνεται τὸ βράδυ,
τὰ μυστικὰ τὰ κάλλη τῆς νὰ κρύβῃ, νὰ σκεπάζῃ.
Σηκώνεται, σηκώνεται, ψηλὰ ψηλὰ ἀνεβαίνει
σάν ἱερὸ θυμίαμα μὲ χίλιας εὐωδίας,
ποῦ βγαίνει ἀπὸ τὴν Ἥπειρο σάν ἀπὸ ῥημοκκλησι,
καὶ στὰ ποδάρια τοῦ Θεοῦ τρέχει πιστὰ νὰ φέρῃ
τῆς κόρης τὸ παράπονο, τὰ δάκρυα τῆς σκλάβας.

Πόσαις φορές ἀπὸ μακρὰν, ἀνήλικο παιδάκι
μὲ δακρυσιμένο βλέφαρο, μ' ἀπόκρυφη ἐλπίδα,
ὁ δύστυχος ἐκύτταξε τὴν καταχνιά τοῦ Πίνδου!
Μοῦ ἐφαίνετο πῶς ἦτανε καπνὸς ἀπὸ τουφέκι
κ' ἐπρόσμενα σιωπηλὸς ν' ἀκούσω τὴ βοή του.

38

smiling three times crosses himself
then with love and fear takes from his chest
an amulet and piously kisses it.

Soon he slept. The world breathed,
the clouds disappeared, the moon shone...
As if heaven celebrates the sleep of its foe.

§

SECOND SONG REPENTANCE

Over Pindos, sweet dawn appears unnoticed
sprinkling with the morning's dew its every step.
The lake is calm, asleep,
and light foam plays sweetly on the shore
like a small child's peaceful breathing.
At times the wind breezes happily.
With innocent wings over the lake
glides and playfully steals from her a kiss.
And she, who is shy, cringes, her forehead
pausing on a frown, and the wind subsides.
The mist, which every night spreads over her
to cover and conceal her secret beauty,
now lifts and rises, white like snow.
It rises and climbs high, over Ipiros,
like sacred incense with a thousand fragrances,
as from a country church,
and hastens to bring to God's feet
the woman's lament, the slave's tears.

How many times from far away,
with tearful adolescent eyes and a secret hope,
I stared at Mount Pindos's mist!
It looked like rifle smoke
and I quietly expected to hear its roar.

39

Καὶ μιὰν ἡμέρα, πᾶστραψε τὸ σύννεφο κι ἀκούσθη
σὰ μιὰ βροντὴ θανάσιμος, πόσαις φοαῖς τὴ νύχτα
ἐτέντωσα τὰ μάτια μου, ἀνοιξα τὴν καρδιά μου
γιὰ νὰ χορτάσω τὴ βοή, τὴ λάμψη τοῦ πολέμου!
Μὴν ἦτον ὄνειρο σκληρό, μὴν ἦτο ψεῦτρα ἐλπίδα;
Ἄν ἦτον ὄνειρο σκληρό, ἂν ἦτο ψεῦτρα ἐλπίδα,
εἰσάκουσόν με, Πλάστη μου, καὶ δώσε μου τὴ χάρι
τὸν ὕπνιν τὸν αἰώνιον νὰ κοιμηθῶ στὸ μνημα,
καὶ τὸνειρό μου τὸ γλυκὸ γιὰ συντροφιά μου νὰ χῶ.

Ποιὸς εἶδε τὸ φθινόπωρο μιὰν εὐμορφὴ αὐγούλα,
κρύο, πικρὸ χαιρετίσμα τῆς νιότης, ποῦ γηράζει,
καὶ τῆς ζωῆς, ποῦ σβύνεται, καὶ ποιὸς δὲν ἐνθυμήθη
τὴν ὥρα του τὴν ἑσπέρη, τὸ ψυχομάχημά του!

Ἐξύπνησε πρῶτ' ἀπὸ τὴν δύστυχον ἡ Φροσύνη
καὶ τὴν ἀκόμη ξέπλεγε ἔμπρὸς στὸ παραθύρι
ἐκάθησε περίλυπη καὶ κλαίει μοναχὴ τῆς.
Τὰ μάτια τῆς, ποῦ ἐλάμπανε πνιμμένα μὲς τὸ δάκρυ,
ἀπαντηθήκανε κρυφὰ μὲ τῆς αὐγῆς τὰ μάτια,
κ' ἡ μιὰ τὴν ἄλλη ἐκύτταζε σὰν νάταν ἀδελφάδαις.
Τὰστέρια, ποῦ ταῖς ἐβλεπαν, ἀγάλια ἀγάλια σβυῶνται
χωρὶς νὰ ξέροντε κι' αὐτὰ ποῖα λάμψι τὰ θαμβόνοι.

Ἡ κιτριὰ χαρούμενη τὰ φύλλα τῆς ἀνοίγει
ἐρωτευμένη τῇ θωρεῖ, καὶ μὲ τὴ μυρωδιά τῆς
τῆς ρίχνει χαιρετίσματα καὶ τὴν καλημερίζει.
Γιατί τέτοιο παράπονο, γιατί μὲ τέτοια πίκρα;
Τί νάχη καὶ τὰ δένδρα τῆς δὲ γέρνει νὰ κυττάξῃ;
Ἐκεῖ τὸ δάκρυ, πῶφυγεν ἀπὸ τὰ βλέφαρά τῆς
κ' ἐπῆγε κ' ἐσταμάτησε στὰ χεῖλη τῆς ἐπάνω
σὰ μιὰ βανίδα ἀπὸ δροσιά, ποῦ κρέμεται στὸ ρόδο,
ποιὸς πόνος τὸ φανέρωνε, πῶς κλαίνει τέτοια μάτια;

And one day when the clouds flashed
and a deadly din was heard, how many times at night
I opened my eyes wide, opened my heart
to enjoy the roar, the splendor of war!
Was it an unreal dream, was it a false hope?
If it were a harsh dream, a false hope,
hear me, my Creator, and grant me
in my tomb perpetually to sleep,
having as companion this sweet dream.

Who sensed in an autumn's beautiful dawn,
the cold bitter farewell of youth growing old,
of life perishing, and did not think
of his last hour, his soul's last battle?

Early in the morning miserable Frossini woke up.
Disheveled by the window sat
and sorrowful alone she cries.
Her eyes shining and drowned in tears,
secretly met with dawn's eyes,
like sisters at each other they looked.
The watching stars slowly vanish
without knowing what splendor dims them.

The lemon tree happily opens its leaves
stares at her like a lover and with its redolence
sends her greetings and good morning bids.
Why such grief, such bitterness?
Why does she pay no attention to her trees?
This tear that left her eyelid
rolled and stopped on her lips
like a dew drop hanging from a rose.
What pain would cause such eyes to weep?

Ἐκλαυγε, πάντοτ' ἔκλαυγε χωρὶς ν' ἀναστενάξῃ,
λὲς καὶ δὲν ἔχει πλεῖο φωνή, λὲς κ' ὅλη ἡ εὐμορφία της
θὰ λυώσῃ μὲς στὰ δάκρυα. Φροσύνη, πῶς δὲν κρένεις;
Στάζουν τὰ μάτια της βροχὴς, τὴν τραχηλιά της βρέχουν
καὶ διαπερνοῦν τὰ στήθη της, τ' ἀγγελικά της στήθη.
Ἐσπάραξεν ἡ δύστυχη σὰν ἔνοιωσε τὸ κρύο,
ποῦ ἐδάγκανε τὴ σάρκα της καὶ μιὰν ἀνατριχίλα
ἄκουσε μέσα στὴν καρδιά σκληρὰ νὰ τήνε σφάζῃ.

Μαραίνεται ἀπ' τὸ φόβο της, τὸ χέρι της ἀπλώνει
κι ἀρπάζει, σφίγγει λαίμαργα τὸν ἔρμο της τὸν κόρφο.
Γιατὶ θυμᾶται ἡ δύστυχη θυμᾶται πῶς μιὰ μέρα,
ἀθά μάνα καὶ γλυκειά, τῆς ἔβρεχε τὴ ρόγα
εὐλογημένο κι ἀφθονοῦ τὸ μητρικὸ της γάλα.
Ὡ τί σκληρὸ μαρτύριο! Ἀρνήθη τὰ παιδιὰ της,
ἀρνήθη τ' ἀγγελούδια της γιὰ τὸ Μουχτάρ, ποῦ φεύγει!

Ἀλλοίμονον στὴν ἀσπλαχνὴ καὶ τὴν κακὴ τὴ μάνα,
ποῦ τὰ παιδιὰ, τὸ γάλα της, προδώσῃ, λησμονήσῃ!
Δὲν ξέρεῖ ὅτι τὰ στήθη της ἐνὸς Θεοῦ τὸ χέρι
τάπλασε παντοδύναμα. Εἶδε τὴν εὐμορφίαν τους
κ' ἔχαρῃ καὶ ταῦλόγῃ καὶ μυστικὰ ταῦχῃθη,
καὶ μέσα τους ἐφύλαξε, φιλόστοργος πατέρας,
τὴν πλαστοργό του δύναμη καὶ τὴν ἀθανασία.
Ἀλλοίμονοι! Ἀλλοίμονοι! στὴν ἀσπλαχνὴ τὴ μάνα,
ποῦ καθαρὸ κι ἀμίαντο τὸ γάλα δὲ φυλάξῃ!

Τοῦ φθινοπώρου τὰ πουλιὰ ἀρχίζουν νὰ ξυπνοῦνε
καὶ τὰ βρεμμένα τους φτερά τινάζουνε, στεγνώνουν.
Τί καρτερεῖς σύ, δύστυχη, τί καρτερεῖς ν' ἀκούσῃς;
Δὲ βλέπεις, τὰστρα ἐφύγανε, Φρόσω, καὶ σύ δὲ φεύγεις;
Θέλεις ὁ ἥλιος νὰ σέ ἰδῇ, νὰ σέ ξαφνίσῃ ἡ μέρα;
Ἄν σέ ῥωτήσουν γιατί κλαῖς, τί θὰ τοὺς πῇς, Φροσύνη;

She is weeping, weeping without a sigh
as if she has no more voice, as if her beauty
is melting in her tears. Frossini, why don't you speak?
Her eyes, dripping like rain, soak her collar
and pierce her breasts, her angelic breasts.
Unhappily she quivered feeling the cold
biting her lips, and a shiver
without mercy stabbed her in the heart.

Paralyzed by fear she clutches
and greedily holds her bosom.
Because she remembers, the poor dear,
she remembers that once
when she was an innocent, sweet mother
blessed and abundant milk flowed from her nipples.
What a cruel torment! She abandoned her children,
forsook her angels for Mouchtar, who is off to battle.

Alas hard-hearted and wicked mother,
who her children, her milk, betrays and forgets!
She doesn't know that her breasts were made powerful
by God's hand. He saw their beauty
He rejoiced and secretly blessed them,
and like a loving father, therein He preserved
His creative power and immortality.
Alas! Alas hard-hearted mother
who did not guard her milk unsoiled and pure.

Autumn's birds begin to wake up
shaking their wet wings to dry.
Ill-fated Frosso, what are you waiting to hear?
The stars are gone, why do you tarry?
Do you wish the sun to shine on you?
If asked why you weep, what would you then say?

Ἀπὸ μακρὰ τρεῖς πιστολαῖς ἐλάμψαν, ἐβροντήσαν,
ἀκούει ἓνα χλημήτισμα καὶ τάλογο γνωρίζει ...
Νᾶναι ὁ Μουχτάρ, ὅπου περνᾷ, νᾶν' ὁ Μουχτάρ, ποῦ φεύγει;
Ἐξύπνησε γιὰ μιὰ στιγμή, ἐσφόγγισε τὸ δάκρυ,
γιὰ νὰ μπορέσῃ νὰ τὸν δῇ. Ἀκόμη θαμποφέγγει,
καὶ τότε κρύβει ἢ καταχνιά. Φθάνει, Φροσύνη, φθάνει.
Θυμήσου τὰ παιδάκια σου, φθάνει, λησμονήσέ τον.
Κ' ἐν' ὧ γιὰ ὕστερη φορά σπρώχνει μακρὰ τὸ βλέμμα,
γιὰ νὰ μβῇ μὲς στὸ σύγνεφο νὰ τότε χαιρετίσῃ,
γλυκεῖα φωνὴ τὴν ἔκραζε, γλυκὸ τραγοῦδι ἀκούει·

Σὰ φύλλο κίτρινο καὶ μαραμένο
μὲ παίρνει ὁ ἄνεμος μὲ τὰ φτερά
μακρυ' ἀπὸ σέβαν, παραδαρμένο,
Φροσύνη, ἀγάπα με στὴν ξενιτεία.

Τὸ κύμ' ἀτάραχο στὸ περιγιάλι
γλυκὰ ἐκοιμώτουσε ὕπνο βαθύ·
Βορείας ἐφύσησε κι ἀνεμοζάλη,
στὸ βράχο τῶρριξε νὰ συντριφθῇ.

Φροσύνη, μ' ἔστειλαν νὰ πάω στὰ ξένα,
νὰ πάω στὸν πόλεμο, μὲς στὴ φωτιά.
Βγάλε ἀπ' τὰ χεῖλή σου τ' ἀγαπημένα,
δός μου γιὰ σὺντροφο χίλια φιλιὰ.

Ἄν ἦλθ' ἡ μέρα μου, ψυχὴ, καρδιά μου,
τὰ ξένα χώματα, ξένα πουλιά
νὰ πιῶν τὸ αἷμά μου, τὰ σωθικά μου
νὰ φᾶνε λαίμαργα στὴν ἐρημιά,

Ποιὸς ξεύρει, ἀγάπη μου, μὴ τὰ φιλιὰ σου
ψυχὴ μου δώσουνε κι ἀναστηθῶ
κ' ἔλθω σάν ὄνειρο στὴν ἀγκαλιά σου,
Φροσύνη, ὁ δύστυχος νὰ κοιμηθῶ.

Χειμῶνας ἔρχεται, σύγνεφα, χιόνια.
Τᾶνθ' ἐπετάξανε κ' οἱ μυρωδιᾶς·
πάνε, Φροσύνη μου, τὰ χελιδόνια,
φυλάξου, ἐπλάκωσαν μαύραις νυχταῖς.

From far away three gunshots thundered and flashed,
she heard a neighing and recognized the horse ...
Is it Mouchtar passing, is it Mouchtar departing?
For a moment she became alert, wiped her tears
to be able to see him. The light is still dim
and the mist hides him. Enough, Frossini, enough.
Remember your little children, forget Mouchtar.
And while for the final time she pushes her gaze far,
to pierce the cloud to greet him,
a sweet voice calls her, she hears a sweet song.

Like a yellow and withered leaf
the wind takes me on its wings,
tosses me about, far away from you.
Frossini, love me when I will be away.

The serene wave on the shore
was sleeping sweetly and deeply.
The mistral blew tempestuous
and tossed and smashed it on the rocks.

Frossini, they sent me to foreign lands,
to fire and war.
Deliver from your lovely lips
a thousand kisses for company to keep.

If my day has come, my sweetheart,
for the foreign birds and the foreign land
to drink my blood, to eat my guts
greedily in the wilderness,

who knows, my love, your kisses
might give me soul and I may rise
and come back like a dream in your arms,
Frossini, to sleep.

Winter is coming, clouds, snow,
the flowers withered, the scents
and the swallows are gone, my Frossini.
Beware, dark nights are coming.

Γεράκι ἀχόρταγο, σκληρό ξιφτέρι
Ὁ' ἀρχίστη ὀλόγυρα νὰ κυνηγά.
Ψυχὴ μου, ἀλλοίμονον στὸ περιστέρι,
ἂν τωῆρ μόνου του μὲς στὴ φωλειά.

Φροσύνη, μ' ἔστειλαν νὰ πάω στὰ ξένα,
νὰ πάω στὸν πόλεμο, μὲς στὴ φωτειά.
Ποιὸς ξεύρ' ἡ μοῖρά μου τ' ἔχει γραμμένα·
ψυχὴ μου, Φρόσω μου, σ' ἀφίνω γειά.

.....

Παύει ἡ φωνὴ τοῦ τραγουδιοῦ καὶ τὰ στερνὰ τὰ λόγια
μὲ τῆς Φροσύνης τὸνομα, ὅπου ἀντηχοῦσε ἀκόμη,
μέσα στὸ φλοῖσβο τοῦ νεροῦ ἐκρύφτηκαν, χωνεύουν·
κι ὁ ξένος, ὅπου ἐδιάβαινε εἰς τοῦ γιαλοῦ τὴν ἄκρη,
ἄκουσε, λίμνη, μυστικά τὸ γαλανό σου κύμα
νὰ ψιθυρίζη παίζοντας μὲ τὸν ἀφρό σου—Φρόσω.

.....

Κεντὰ τὸ ἄτι του ὁ Μουχτάρ, κ' ἐκεῖνο πρὶν πετάξῃ.
Ὁλόρθο μὲ τὰ πόδια του τὸ σύγνεφο χτυπάει.
Λές καὶ τὸ μαῦρο προσπαθεῖ τὴν καταχνιά νὰ διώξῃ
καὶ τὴν κυρά του ἀπὸ μακρὰ νὰ χαιρετήσῃ ἀκόμη.
Τὸ πάτημά του ἀκούεται, φαίνονται ἀκόμ' ἡ σπίθαις,
ὅπου πετοῦν τὰ πέταλα χτυπώντας τὸ στουρινάρι.
Λάμπει γιὰ ὑστέρη φορά μιὰ πιστολιά καὶ σβνέται,
στερνὸ φίλ', ποῦ φεύγοντας ῥίχν' ὁ Μουχτάρ στὴ Φρόσω.

.....

Σιγὴ, σιγὴ στὸν οὐρανό, σιγὴ, σιγὴ στὴ λίμνη,
ὁ κόσμος δὲν πικραίνεται γιὰ μιὰ δυστυχισμένη.
Λάμπει ὁ ἥλιος καθαρὸς, τὰ φύλλ' ἀπὸ τὰ δένδρα
πέφτουν σὰν πρῶτα κατὰ γῆς τῶνα σιμὰ ἀπὸ τ' ἄλλο·
λαλοῦν τοῦ βάλτου τὰ πουλιά, ἀκούετ' ὁ δερβίσης,
ἄρχισε πάλιν ἡ ζωὴ, τὰ Ἰάννινα ξυπνήσαν.

Greedy hawks and hard-hearted sparrow-hawks
will start hunting all around
my love, alas to the dove
if they find it in the nest alone.

Frossini, they send me to foreign lands
to fire and war.
Who knows what is written for me
my sweetheart, my Frosso, farewell I bid.

.....

The signing voice ceases and the final words,
with Frossini's name still resonating,
are concealed in the murmur of the waves;
and a stranger wandering by the shore line,
heard the lake's blue waves whisper Frosso's name
as they danced with the foam.

.....

Mouchtar spurs his horse and the beast
standing erect pounds the mist with its hooves
as if trying to dissolve it
and from far away his lady to greet.
Its treading can be heard and sparks can be seen
flying from its horseshoes as they hit the flint.
A gun shot flashes for the last time and fades,
a final kiss, which departing Mouchtar to Frossini sends.

.....

Silence in the sky, silence on the lake,
for a despondent the world is not concerned.
The sun shines clean,
the leaves fall to the ground side by side;
birds from the marsh prattle, the dervish is heard,
life started again, Yannena woke up.

παίζουν στα χόρτα τὰ παιδιὰ καὶ στὴν τρελλὴ χαρὰ τους
δὲν ἀκούσαν τὸ σήμαντρο, ποὺ θλιβερὰ ἀντηχοῦσε
σημαίνοντας λυπητικά, καὶ δὲν ἐκαταλάβαν
ἓνα σταυρό, ποὺ ἐπέρασε, καὶ τέσσαρους, ποὺ ἐφέρναν
ἐνὸς παιδιοῦ τὸ λείψανο, ποὺ χθὲς ἦτο μαζί τους.

Ἀκίνητη, σιωπηλή, ἐκεῖ στὸ παραθύρι,
χωρὶς ποτε τὰ χεῖλη της μιὰ λέξι νὰ προφέρουν,
ἔμεινε πάντα ἡ δύστυχη. Εἶναι βουβὸς ὁ πόνος.
Προβαίνει ὁ ἥλιος στὰ βουνά, καὶ μιὰ θερμὴ του ἀχτίδα
φιλεῖ γλυκὰ στὸ μέτωπο τῆ μαύρῃ τῇ Φροσύνῃ.
Εἶδε τὸ μάτι τοῦ Θεοῦ τὸ δάκρυ της, τὴ λύπη
καὶ μὲ τὸ φῶς τὸ μυστικὸ τῇ βρέχει, τῇ βαντίζει,
τῇς δίνει νέο βάπτισμα, τῇ λούει, τῇμε πλένει
μὲ τὰ χραῖνα τὰ χέρια του ἀπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτία
καὶ τώρα βγαίνει καθαρὴ, βγαίνει μ' οὐράνια κάλλη
ἀπ' τῇ μεγάλῃ τοῦ Θεοῦ τῇ θείᾳ κολυμβήθρα.

Ἀμαρτωλή, λησμόνησε τοῦ κόσμου τὰ στολίδια,
ἄλλος νυμφίος σ' ἀγαπᾷ. Φροσύνη, μὴ δειλιάσῃς,
ἑτοίμασε τὰ χέρια σου νὰ λάβουν ἀρραβῶνα
τὰ σίδερα καὶ τὰ σχοινιά, ποὺ ἀπόψε θὰ σὲ δέσουν.
Στολίσου, κόρη, ὁ οὐρανὸς σοῦ δίνει, σοῦ χαρίζει
τὴν πρώτη σου τὴν παρθενιά. Φροσύνη, μὴ δειλιάσῃς
τὴν ὥρα, ποὺ τοῦ γάμου σου θ' ἀνάψουνε τὰ φῶτα
Εἶν' ἱερὸ μυστήριον,
Φροσύνη, τὸ μαρτύριον

Ἐνύχτωσε. Γονατιστὴ ἐμπρὸς σὲ μιὰν εἰκόνα
ὀλημερὶς ἐδάκρυεν ἡ δύστυχ' ἡ Φροσύνη.
Ποῦ ταῦραν τόσα δάκρυα τὰ μαρτωλά της μάτια!
Πάντα βουβή, τὰ χέρια της στὰ στήθη σταυρωμένα,
τὸ βλέμμα δὲν ἐσήκωσε ποτέ της νὰ κυττάξῃ
τὸ πρόσωπο τ' ἀγγελικὸ τῆς Δέσποινας τοῦ κόσμου
ἀκόμη μὴν ἐντρέπεται, μὴ δὲν τολμᾷ ἡ καυμένη
νὰ ἰδῇ τὴ μάνα τοῦ Θεοῦ μὲ τὸ παιδί στὰ χέρια
κ' ἐνθυμηθῇ ποῦ ἐβάσταξε κ' ἐκέλετο μιὰν ἡμέρα
ἓνα παιδί στὸν κόρφο της καὶ τὰ φηκε κ' ἐχάθη;

Children play in the grass, but in their frenzied joy
heard not the bell sounding, mournful,
ringing in lament, nor did they see
the cross in procession, and the four carrying
the corpse of a child, yesterday's playmate.

Firm and taciturn by the window
with no words spoken by her lips,
pitiable Frossini stands. Her pain is silent.
The sun rises over the mountains
and with a warm beam sweetly kisses her forehead.
God's eyes saw her tears, her grief
and with a light shower sprinkle her,
give her a new baptism; with His immaculate hands
He washes and cleanses her from her sins
and now from God's holy font she comes out pure,
with a celestial beauty.

Sinful woman, abandon the world's riches,
a different bridegroom loves you. Frossini, don't be timid,
prepare your hands to betroth
the iron and the ropes, which today will bind you.
Adorn yourself, heaven is offering you
your maidenhood again. Frossini, don't quail
the hour your wedding candle is lit:
Martyrdom, Frossini,
is a holy sacrament.

Night fell. Prostrate before an icon
distressed Frossini wept all day.
How can her sinful eyes find so many tears!
Always silent, with crossed hands over her chest,
never raised her eyes to look at the Madonna;
maybe in shame she dares not
see God's mother with the child in her hands
and be reminded that once she also held
a child in her bosom, a child that she abandoned.

Ναιώθει βαρεία τὰ βλέφαρα, τὴν ἐλυπήθη ὁ ὕπνος
κι ἀνέλπιστη παρηγοριά ἔρχεται νὰ τῆς δώσῃ.
Ἀποσταμένη σκώνεται, τὰ γόνατά της τρέμουν
καὶ πέφτει ν' ἀποκοιμηθῇ στὸ μαῦρό της κρεβάτι.
Κράζει σιμά της τὴ Χρυσή, πιστὴ της παραμάνα,
καὶ σὰν πουλί, ποῦ σκιάζεται καὶ χώνει τὸ κεφάλι
μέσ στ' ἀπαλά του τὰ φτερά καὶ πέφτει νὰ κορινιάσῃ.
τὸ δακρυσμένο πρόσωπο στὴν ἀγκαλιά της κρύβει.

Φροσύνη

Χρυσή μου, παραμάνα μου, κρύνω, σκέπασέ με.
Ἀκόμη δὲ σ' ἐφίλησα, σκύψε, συχώρεσέ με.
Μὴ μὲ μαλώσῃς, μάνα μου, καὶ μὴ μοῦ βαρκομήσῃς.
στὴν ἀγκαλιά σου κρύψε με μήπως μ' ἀποκοιμήσῃς.
Ἀπόστασαν τὰ μάτια μου, βαγίστηκε ἡ καρδιά μου·
ἂν μῶμεινάνε δάκρυα, τᾶχω γιὰ τὰ παιδιὰ μου.
Φέρε μου ἐδῶ τὸ χέρι σου, βάλ' το στὸ μέτωπό μου,
χαίδεψε τὰ μαλλιά μου καὶ στὸ προσκέφαλό μου
γύρε καὶ σὺ τὸ πρόσωπο νὰ κοιμηθῶ μαζί σου·
δὲν εἶμαι ἐγὼ παιδί σου;

Χρυσή μου, ἀπόψε σκιάζομαι. Ἄναψε τὸ κανδήλι,
τὸ φῶς δροσίζει τὴν καρδιά, σὰν τὸ νερὸ τὰ χεῖλη.
Ξεφτύλισέ το μὴ σβυσθῇ, μὴ μείνω στὸ σκοτάδι
καὶ μοῦ φανῇ πῶς ζωντανή κατέβηκα στὸν ἕρδη.
Θυμιάτισε τὸ κόνισμα, τὴ μοναχὴ μου ἐλπίδα ...
Μάνα μου, κάτι ἐπέταξε! ... Μὴν ἦτο νυχτερίδα;
Κρύψε με, μάνα! μὴ φωνὴ μοῦ ἐφάνη πῶς μὲ κράζει ...
Ἰὰ ἰδὲς τὶ κρύος ἴδρωτας! ἡ σάρκα μου σπαράζει.
Παρθένε μου, ἂν ἀμάρτησα, ἔκλαψα, συχώρεσέ με,
ἔλα καὶ βοήθησέ με.

Ἀρνήθηκα τὴ νειότη μου, τὰ πλούτη. Δέσποινά μου,
ἐπλυνα μὲ τὰ δάκρυα τὰ τόσα τὰ κακὰ μου,
Σπλαχνίσου με! σπλαχνίσου με, θυμήσου πῶς μητέρα
ἀθῶο στόμα μ' ἔκραξε κ' ἐμέ, Κυρά, μιὰ μέρα.
Σπλαχνίσου με τὴν ὀρφανή, σὲ κράζω μὲ λαχτάρα.

She feels her eyelids heavy, sleep pities her
and grants her an unexpected comfort.
She rises exhausted with trembling knees
and in her bleak bed she sinks.
She calls Chrissi, her faithful nurse, by her to come
and as a frightened bird which perches,
thrusting its head in its soft wings,
her tearful face in her bosom hides.

Frossini

My Chrissi, my nurse, I am cold, cover me.
Let me kiss you, forgive me.
Don't curse me and don't scold me,
bury me in your bosom, maybe I will sleep.
My heart is broken, my eyes are beaten.
If any tears are left I keep them for my children.
Extend your hand, rest it on my head,
my hair caress and on my pillow
your face rest. Let me with you fall asleep.

My Chrissi, tonight I am frightened. Light the votive lamp,
light soothes the heart like water on the lips.
Unravel the wick, for if it smolders I will be left in darkness
feeling as if to Hades alive I descended.
Incense the icon, my only hope ...
My mother, something fluttered! ... Was it a bat?
Hide me, mother; it sounded like a voice calling me ...
Look at my cold sweat! My flesh writhes.
My Virgin, I sinned, I wept, forgive me,
lend me your hand.

My Madonna, I rejected youth and riches
tears washed my many wrongdoings.
Be merciful to me! Feel pity, remember
that once an innocent mouth called me mother.
I beseech you, be lenient to a stray soul.

Με συνεπήρε ή μοίρα μου, μ' έπαίδεψε ή κατάρα
του κόσμου, που μ' έμίσησε, μ' έκαψε τὸ στεφάνι,
που μώβαλαν στὸ μέτωπο. Φθάνει, Κυρά μου, φθάνει!
Άγάπη δεν σου έζήτησεν ή δύστυχη ή Φροσύνη.
γυρεύω έλεημοσύνη.

Άπόψε που σ' εκύπταζα, μου φάνηκε πὼς είδα
στὰ χείλη σου νά επέρασε σάν άστρο, σάν άχτίδα,
ένα γλυκό χαμόγελο κι ανάζησα ή καιμένη.
Όχι μὴ μ' αφήσης, Δέσποινα, τὴν καταφρονεμένη.
Έρημη κι ολομόναχη, απόψε στὸ κρεβάτι
προφύλαξε με, σκέπασε με τὸ γλυκό σου μάτι.
Χρυσή μου, μάνα μου, μὴν κλαίς, με κάνεις καί τρομάζω.
Πές μου γιὰ τὰ παιδάκια μου ... έδείλιστα ... νυστάζω.
Μελέτα μου τα, μάνα μου, ν' ακούω στ' όνειρό μου
πὼς τάχω στὸ πλευρό μου.

Καθὼς κρύβεται στὰ φύλλα τὸ χειμῶνα τὸ πουλί,
γιὰ νά μὴ τωρή τὸ χιόνι, τὸ νερό κ' άστραπή
καθὼς κρύβεται στοῦ ρόδου τὴ μυρόβλητη άγκαλιά
ή άθώα πεταλούδα γιὰ νά φύγη τὴ δροσιά·
έτσι κρύβεται ή Φροσύνη μέσ στὸν κόρφο τὸν πιστό
τῆς Χρυσῆς, που τὴν κυττάζει με κρυφόνε στεναγμό.
Κλεί τὰ βλέφαρα τὰ μαύρα, δεν ακούεται ή καρδιά
μέσ στὰ στήθη της σάν πρῶτα τρομασμένη νά χτυπᾶ.
Η Παρθένος τὴν λυπήθη,
τί γλυκά π' άπεκοιμήθη.

Ξύπνα, ξύπνα καί χτυποῦνε. "Υπνος, θάνατος, ζωή,
μιὰ στιγμή τὰ συνενώνει, τὰ χωρίζει μιὰ στιγμή.
Ξύπνα, δύστυχη, τὸν ύπνο ζωντανή μὴν καρτερῆς
στὸ κρεβάτι σου τὸ μαύρο νά χορτάσης, νά χαρῆς.
ξύπνα κι αύριο θά λάβῃς άλλο στρώμα δροσερό
καί προσκέφαλο τὸ κύμα καί σεντόνι τὸν άφρό.

I was deluded by fate, pestered by the world's curse,
which abhorred me and burned the wedding crown
set on my head. Enough, my Lady, enough!
Forlorn Frossini doesn't ask for love,
I seek mercy.

Tonight looking at You it appeared that I saw
on Your lips, like a passing star, like a beam,
a sweet smile reviving me.
Oh! Madonna, don't leave me, disdained that I am.
Deserted and lonely tonight in my bed
with your sweet eyes cover me and protect me.
My Chrissi, my mother, don't weep, you make me fear.
Tell me about my little children ... I am sleepy.
Talk about them, my mother, to feel in my dreams
that I have them next to me.

Like a bird burrowing during the winter under the leaves,
protected from snow, rain, and lightning
like an innocent butterfly hiding in the rose's
balmy embrace to avoid the dew,
Frossini hides in Chrissi's loyal bosom
who looks at her with a furtive sigh.
She closes her dark eyelids, her heart
does not beat frightened as before.
The Virgin pitied her,
sweetly she slept.

Wake up, wake up, they knock. Death, life and sleep
joined by an instant, by an instant separated.
Wake up unfortunate, as long as you live
do not expect in your gravely bed to enjoy your sleep,
wake up and tomorrow you will be given a fresh pallet,
the wave for pillow, and its spray for sheet.

Ξύπνα, δύστυχη Φροσύνη, ό φονιάς σου σέ ζητεί,
ανοιξέ του, μη φοβείσαι, ή Παρθένος σέ θωρεί.
Τρίζει ή θύρα, τρέμει, πέφτει
στά χτυπήματα του κλέφτη.

Ξαφνίζεται στὸν ὕπνο της... Τὰ μάτια της ἀνοίγει,
ὁ φόβος τήν πνίγει
Στέκετ' ἐμπρὸς της ἄφωνος ὁ γέρος ὁ Βιζύρης
καί πίσω του ὁ Ταχέρης.
Τὸ πρόσωπό του εἶναι φωτιά, τὰ μάτια του γυαλίζουν
καὶ ἀνήσυχτα γυρίζουν.
Μισόγυμνη τὴν ἔβλεπε, μονάχη στὸ κρεβάτι,
τὴν τρώγει μὲ τὸ μάτι.
Ποιὸς ἄδης τὸν ἐγέννησε, ποιά γῆ τότε βαστάει;
Γιὰ ἰδές, χαμογελάει,
καὶ ἀσπρίζουν τὰ δόντια του μὲς στὸ πλατὺ του στόμα,
λαίμαργα σὰν τὸ χῶμα.
Ποτέ της δὲν ἐχτύπησε καθὼς χτυπᾷ ἡ καρδιά του,
θὰ σπάσει τὰ πλευρά του.
Σὰ φλόγ' ἀπὸ τὸ λάρυγγα φυσάει ὁ ἀνασασμός του,
καμίν' εἶν' ὁ λαιμός του.
Καὶ τὰ πλατύντ' αὐτὴ τὴν στήθη του π' ἀνεβοκατεβαίνουν
λὲς καὶ τὴ φλόγα του φυσοῦν καὶ ἀγέρα τὴ χορταίνουν.

Σιγά, σιγά τὸ χέρι του μὲ τρόπο ἀνασηκώνει
κ' ἐπάνω της τὰ πλύνει.
Τὰ δάχτυλά του φέγγουνε, ζωσμένα δαχτυλίδια,
λὲς κ' εἶνε τόσα φίδια,
ὅπου στὸν ἥλιο λάμπουνε φαρμακοστολισμένα,
μὲς στ' αἶψη ξαπλωμένα.
Καὶ δὲν τολμοῦσε ὁ δαίμονας τὴ δύστυχη νάγγισι,
μήπως καὶ τὴν ξυπνήσῃ.
Ἐμμεῖν' ἐκεῖ κρεμάμενο τοῦ Ἀλήπασα τὸ χέρι
σὰν νάτανε μαχαῖρι.
Βαρύ, βαρὺ σὰ σίδερο, σιγά τὸ κατεβάζει,
τὰ στήθη της κυττάζει.
Κ' ἐκείνη, πῶνιρεύεται τὴν πρώτη παρθενιά της,
τὰ κρύβει σὰν παιδιὰ της.

Wake up unhappy Frossini, open the door to the murderer
who seeks you, don't be frightened, the Virgin watches you.
The door creaks, shakes, falls
from the bangs of the thief.

She startles in her sleep... She opens her eyes,
in terror she chokes.
The old Vizier stands before her speechless
and behind him Tahir.
His face is fire, his eyes shine
and restlessly rove.
He sees her alone, half-naked in bed,
he devours her with his eyes.
What hell bore him, what earth holds him?
Look, he is smiling
his teeth whitened in his wide mouth,
gluttonous like the dry earth.
His heart hammers like never before,
it will break his ribs.
Like flame from his mouth his breath blows,
his throat is a kiln.
And his broad chest swells
with air his flame to sustain.

Slowly his quivering hand rises
and extends it upon her.
His fingers glitter loaded with rings
like snakes
gleaming under the sun, lying among the flowers,
adorned with venom.
He didn't dare—the demon—to touch her
and alarm her.
Ali Pasha's hand remained suspended
like a knife.
Heavy like iron slowly he lowers it,
he looks at her breasts.
And she, who is dreaming of her maidenhood,
hides them like children.

Καὶ τὰ κρατεῖ σφιχτὰ σφιχτὰ, φοβεῖται μὴν τὰ χάσπ,
μὴ κάποιος τῆς τάρπάσῃ.
Τὸ χέρι ὡστόσο τοῦ φονεῖα εἶνε σιμὰ κ' ἐγγίζει.
Σὰ σπῖθα ἢ Φρόσω ἐπέταξε, κ' ἐμπρὸς του γονατίζει.

Φροσύνη

Βιζύρη, μὴν καταδεχθῆς μὴν ἄχαρι γυναῖκα,
ποῦ σέρνεται στὰ πόδια σου, νὰ τὴν καταφρονέσῃς.
Τρέμουν οἱ πέτρας, ποῦ πατεῖς, ῥαγίζονται κ' οἱ βράχοι,
τὸ πάτημά σου σὰν ἀκοῦν, Βιζύρη, νὰ διαβαίνει.
Κοινορτός, ποῦ σβύνομαι κι' ὅπου μὲ παίρνει ὁ ἀγέρας,
λυπήσου με κ' ἐπάνω μου, Βιζύρη, μὴ πατήσῃς.
Λησμονήσε μὴν ὀρφανὴ καὶ μὴ δυστυχισμένη,
ὅπου ἔχει χρεῖα ἀπὸ ζωῇ γιὰ νὰ δακρύσῃ ἀκόμη.
Τὸ πτώμα, σὰν τὸ θάψουνε καὶ τὸ πλακώσ' ἡ πέτρα,
τ' ἀφίνουνε, τὸ λησμονοῦν, δὲν τὸ ξυπνᾷ κανένας.
Πτώμα κ' ἐγώ, Βιζύρη μου, ἄφες με νὰ μὲ φάγουν
σὰν ἄλλο χῶμα ζωντανή, τὰ δάκρυα κι ὁ πόνος.
Μὲ βλέπεις, ἐμαράθηκα. Λυπήσου με, ἐσπλαχνίαι!

Ἐκύτταζε ὁ Ἀλήπασας στὰ πόδια τοῦ ἀπλωμένου
τὸ ζωντανὸ τὸ λείψανο νὰ κλαίῃ, νὰ στενάζῃ,
κι ἀνατριχίλα μυστικὴ καὶ μυστικὴ τρομάρα
τοῦ πέρασε τὰ κόκαλα καὶ τοῦ δαγκᾷ τὰ σπλάχνα.
Τὸ τρομερὸ τὰμάρτημα, ποῦ μέσα του φωλιάζει,
τρώγει, ξεσχίζει τὴν καρδιά, ποῦ τὼπλασε στὸν κόσμο,
καθὼς τὰ τέκνα τῆς ὀχιάς ξεσχίζουνε καὶ τρώγουν
τὴ μήτρα, ποῦ τὰνάθρεψε, καὶ πρὶν νὰ γεννηθοῦνε
τὸ πρῶτο τὸ φαρμάκι τοὺς στὴ μάνα τοὺς χαρίζουν.
Τὰ μάτια του ἔρριξε ὁ Ἀλῆς στὰ μάτια τοῦ Ταχίρη,
καὶ τὸν προστάζει σιωπηλὰ νὰ τραβηχθῇ, νὰ φύγῃ.
Ὁ δοῦλος τὸν ὑπήκουσε, καὶ φεύγοντας μαζί του
Σύρει καὶ παίρνει τὴ Χρυσή, ποῦ ἐστέκετο στὴν ἄκρη.

And holds them tightly, afraid to lose them
to a plunderer.
But the hand of the slayer is near, groping.
Like a spark Frosso leapt and in front of him kneels.

Frossini

Vizier, do not stoop to scolding a despised woman
who crawls at your feet.
The stones you step on tremble, the rocks crack
when they hear you swagger.
I am but a dissolving dust tossed by the wind,
have pity Vizier, don't tread on me.
Forget this miserable orphan,
who needs her life only to shed more tears.
When a corpse is buried under the tombstone
they leave it, forget it, nobody awakens it.
I am a corpse too, my Vizier, leave me to be consumed
alive by another form of earth, by tears and pain.
You see how withered I am. Have pity on me, mercy!

Ali Pasha looks at the living corpse
spread at his feet, weeping and groaning
and a furtive shudder and a quiver
passes through his bones and his insides sting.
The terrible sin that nests in him
the heart that created it tears and flays,
like the adder's offspring flay and eat
the womb that nurtured them
by gifting their mother with their first poison.
Ali's eyes met Tahir's
and tacitly commanded him to withdraw.
The servant obeyed and leaving
drags with him Chrissi.

Άλῆς

Σήκου, Φροσύνη, ἀπὸ τῇ γῇ, σήκου καὶ κύτταξέ με.
Τὰ τρυφερά σου γόνατα δὲν τὰπλασεν ἡ φύσις
ἐμπρὸς σ' ἐμὲ νὰ σέρωνται, στῇ γῇ νὰ γονατίζουν.
Μὴ μὲ φοβείσαι. Σ' ἀγαπῶ σὰν νάμουνα... πατέρας.
Σήκου, παιδάκι μου, μὴν κλαῖς, ἔλα στὴν ἀγκαλιά μου,
ν' ἀκούσω ποῖός ὁ πόνος σου, νὰ σὲ παρηγορήσω.
Ἀλοίμονον σ' ἐκείνον, ποῦ σ' ἔκαμε νὰ κλάψῃς!

Φροσύνη

Ὅχι, Βιζύρη μου, κάνεις δὲ μῶφταιξε στὸν κόσμο·
ἡ μοῖρα μὲ κατάρτεξε, τοῦ γάμου μου ἡ κατάρτα.
Σ' εὐχαριστῶ, πατέρα μου... Πῶς; ἔφυγε ἡ Χρυσή μου;

Άλῆς

Μὴ σκιάζεσαι. Τὴν ἔστειλα λίγο νερὸ νὰ φέρῃ.
σὰν εἶδα ποῦσουν ἀφῶνη, ἀχνή καὶ λιγωμένη,
τ' ἀγγελικό σου πρόσωπο, Φροσύνη, νὰ βρατίσω.
Τῶρ' ἔρχεται, παιδάκι μου, δὲν εἰμ' ἐγὼ σιμά σου;
Ἀκούμβῃσε τὸ μέτωπο στὰ πατρικά μου στήθη,
παρηγορήσου μιὰ στιγμὴ, ἡσύχασε, μὴ τρέμεις.
Πῶς εἶναι τὰ μαλλάκια σου βρεγμέν' ἀπὸ τὸ δάκρυ;
Ἄφησε μὲ τὰ χέρια μου γλυκὰ νὰ τὰ σφογγίσω.

.....

Ἐπίστεψε τὰ λόγια του, ἐπίστεψε ἡ Φροσύνη,
στὴν ἀγκαλιά τοῦ Ἀλήπασα ἀνάπασαι πῶς θαῦρη,
κ' ἐφίλησε τὰ χέρια του κ' ἐπάνω στὴν καρδιά του
τὸ λυπημένο μέτωπο τὸ βίχνει νὰ ἡσυχάσῃ.
Τὰ γένεια του ἐκυμάτιζαν καὶ κρέμουνταν νὰ πέσουν
σὰν καταράχτης ποταμοῦ ἀπ' τοῦ βουνοῦ τὸ βράχο.
Ὡστόσο τὴν ἐχάιδευε, στὰ δάχτυλά του νοιώθει
τὸ τρεμουλιὸ τοῦ ἔρωτος καὶ λίγο λίγο σφίγγει
τὸ πρόσωπο στὸν κόρφο του, ποῦναι φωτιά καὶ φλόγα.
Ἡ Φρόσω ἀκόμη ἐπίστευε. Τὸ φεῖδι παγκαλιάζει
γλυκὰ τὴν ἀπεκοίμιζε καὶ τήνε φαρμακώνει.

Ali

Rise Frossini from the floor, look at me.
Your soft knees were not fashioned
to crawl and kneel before me.
Do not be afraid of me. I love you... like a father.
Rise, my child, don't cry, come embrace me.
Let me listen to your pain, console you.
Alas to him that made you shed tears!

Frossini

No, my Vizier, it is nobody's fault;
my fate persecuted me, my wedding's curse.
Thank you, my father... What? Has Chrissi left?

Ali

Don't be anxious. When I saw you silent, pale and swooned,
I sent her to bring a little water
with it your angelic face, Frossini, to sprinkle.
She is coming soon, my child, don't worry.
Lean your forehead against my fatherly chest,
calm yourself, appease, don't tremble.
How your hair is wet from the tears!
Let my hands sweetly dry them.

.....

Frossini believes his words
that in his embrace she will find peace
and kisses his hands and on his chest
draws her doleful forehead to find solace.
His beard is waving, hanging, ready to fall
like a waterfall from the mountain's rock.
While caressing her, he feels in his fingers
the trembling of love and slowly clasps
her face on his ablaze-with-passion chest.
Frosso still believes him. The snake she embraces
sweetly hypnotizes and poisons her.

Κ' ἐκεῖ, ποῦ ἐκείνη ἡ δύστυχη ἐπάνω του ἀκουμποῦσε,
ἀκούει μὲς στὰ στήθη του τὸ αἷμά του νὰ βράζει
καὶ τὴν καρδιά του νὰ χτυπᾷ σὰν νᾶθελε ν' ἀνοίξει.
Τρομάζει, διαλογίζεται, θυμάται, ἀνατριχιάζει.
Θέλει νὰ φύγει, δὲν μπορεῖ, τὰ χεῖλη τοῦ Βιζύρη
ἐγγίζουνε ταῖς τρίχες τῆς, κολλοῦνε στὰ μαλλιά τῆς.
Ὁ δράκοντας τὴν ἄρπαξε, τὴν ἔχει μὲς στὸ στόμα
καὶ τῆς βυζαίνει τὴν ψυχὴ καὶ τὴν ῥοφᾷ μὲ λύσσα.
Ἐσύ, ποῦ παραστέκεσαι, Παρθένε, βοήθησέ τη!
Σὰν ἔλαφος, σὰν λύκαινα, ποῦ νοιώθει στὰ πλευρὰ τῆς
τὸ βόλι, ποῦ τῆς ἔρριξεν ὁ κυνηγὸς στὸ λόγγο,
ταράζετ', ἀνδρειεύεται, πηδᾷ μακρὰ καὶ λυέται
ἀπὸ τὰ χέρια τοῦ Ἀλῆ, ποῦ τὴν ἀλυσσοδένου.
Ἀγρίεψε τὸ μάτι τῆς, ὀλόρθη τὸν κυττάζει,
τὴν εἶδ' ὁ Ἀλῆς κ' ἐσβύστηκε, δειλιάζει, γονατίζει.

Ἀλῆς

Φροσύνη γιατί μῶφυγες! Εὐχαριστήσου τώρα,
ποῦ βλέπεις στὰ ποδάρια σου τὸ φοβερό Βιζύρη.
Ποτέ, ποτέ τὰ γόνατα δὲν ἐκλίνει στὸν κόσμο,
καὶ τώρα, ἰδές, ἐμπρός σ' ἐσὲ τὸ μέτωπό μου σκύφτει.
Τὸ μυστικό μου τῶμαθες, μ' ἐπρόδωκ' ἡ καρδιά μου.
Ἄν ἤμπορούσα μόνος μου, μ' αὐτὰ, μ' αὐτὰ τὰ χέρια
σκληρὰ θὰ τὴν ξερρίζωνα, γιὰ νὰ σοῦ τήνε δείξω.
Φροσύνη, ναί, σ' ἀγάπησα, δὲν ντρέπομαι, τὸ λέγω.
Ἄν ἄσπρισ', ἂν ἐγέρασα, γιὰ σέ θὰ ξανανειώσω.
Ἄκουσες μὲς στὰ στήθη μου τὸ αἷμά μου πῶς βράζει.
Εἶναι κι ὁ Πίνδος κατάσπρος καὶ γέρος σὰν ἐμένα,
Φροσύνη, ἰδές τὸν Πίνδο σου μὲ τὰ παλιά του χιόνια
ἐμπρός σου γέρνει τὴν κορφή, σ' ἀπλώνει νὰ πατήσης
τὰ δροσερὰ σου σὺννεφα, τὰ κρύα τὰ νερά του.
Μὴ μὲ κυττάξεις ἄγρια· τὰ πλούτη μου, ἡ ζωὴ μου
εἶνε δικά σου, πάρε τα, γιὰ ἓνα γλυκό σου λόγο,
γιὰ μιὰ ματιά σου ἐσπλαχνικὴ σοῦ δίδω ὅτι κι ἂν ἔχω·
κάθισ' ἐσὺ στὸ θρόνο μου, ζώσου τὴ δύναμί μου.
Δὲ θέλω τίποτα γιὰ μέ, δὲ σοῦ γυρεύω, Φρόσω,
παρὰ τὸ γέρο τὸν Ἀλῆ κάμμιὰ φορὰ ν' ἀφίνης
στὸν ἴσκιό σου, δαφνοῦλά μου, νὰ παίρῃς λίγον ὕπνο.
Ἐπέρασαν χρόνοι πολλοί, ποῦ δὲν σφραγίζω μάτι,
βαρέθηκα τὴ δόξα μου, ἔφαγα τὴ ζωὴ μου
κι ἀκόμη δὲν ἐγνώρισα στὸν κόσμο τὴν ἀγάπη.

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And there, as the woeful leans on him,
she hears inside his chest his boiling blood
and his heart throbbing ready to break open.
Fearful she reflects, remembers, shudders.
She wants to part but she cannot.
Vizier's lips touch her hair and stick to her locks.
The dragon seizes her, has her in the mouth
suckling her soul, sucking with fury.
Stand by her, Virgin Mary, help her!
Like a deer, a wolverine, feeling in her ribs
the bullet, shot by a hunter in the woods,
she is shaken and bravely jumps away
unbinding herself from Ali's chaining hands.
She looks at him erected with raging eyes.
At her sight Ali is smothered and cowardly kneels.

Ali

Frossini, why did you cringe from me? Take delight
in seeing at your feet the fearsome Vizier.
Never, never in this world did I bend my knees,
and now, see, I prostrate myself before you.
You learned my secret, my heart betrayed me.
If I could, I alone, with these hands
I would uproot and show you my heart.
Frossini, yes, I love you, I say it, I am not ashamed.
I am old with white hair but for you I'll be young again.
You heard how in my chest my blood boils.
Pindos, too, is white and old like me,
Frossini, see your Pindos with his old snow
bending and spreading his top for you to walk
through his cool clouds and chilling waters.
Don't look at me with rage; my riches, my life
are yours, take them, for a sweet word,
for one compassionate glance I give you everything I have;
sit on my throne, don my power.
I desire nothing for myself, Frosso, I seek nothing
but to sometimes let old Ali
in your shadow, my little laurel, to rest my eyes.
For years now I cannot rest my eyes,
I am tired of my fame, my life I consumed
and yet love I never knew.

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Φροσύνη, αγάπησέ με σύ, σέ λίγο θά πεθάνω,
δικά σου εἶνε τὰ Γιάννια, ὅλα δικά σου νᾶναι.
Δέν παίρνω τίποτε μ' ἐμέ βαθιά στό μαῦρο μνήμα,
τίποτε, Φρόσω, τίποτε μὴ στερηθῆς γιά μένα,
παρά δυό πῆχες σάβανο κ' ἕνα στερνό φιλί σου.
Σπλαχνίσου με, σπλαχνίσου με, εἶσαι Θεός γιά μένα.
Ὡς τώρα δέν ἐπίστεψα καί τώρα τὸν πιστεύω.
Πιστεύω τὴν εἰκόνα σου, πιστεύω τὴν Παρθένο,
τὸ βάφτισμα, τὸ μύρο σου, πιστεύω πὼς ὑπάρχει
μιὰ δύναμις ἀνώτερη, πῶπλασ' ἐσέ, Φροσύνη.
Ἄρνούμαι τὸν προφήτη μου γιά νὰ μπορέσω ν' ἀλλο-
μαζί μὲ σέ στὸν οὐρανό, καί τὴ στερνὴ τὴν ὥρα
νὰ νοιώσω· τὰ χερᾶκια σου νὰ δένουν τὰ δικὰ μου.
Πές μου, τί ἄλλο μοῦ ζητεῖς; πές μου, τί ἄλλο θέλεις;
Φροσύνη, ἰδὲς τὰ μάτια μου... Εὐλογημένη νάσαι,
ποῦ τὰκαμες κ' ἐδάκρυσαν. Παιδί μου, μὴ μ' ἀφήσης.
Παιδιά δέν ἔχω, ἐφύγανε, ποῖος ξέρεי ἂν θά γυρίσουν!
Σπλαχνίσου με τὸ δύστυχο, ἔχε με σάν... πατέρα.
Ἔλα, Φροσύνη μου, ἔσπλαχνη νὰ μὲ γεροκομίσης.
Λυπήσου με, λυπήσου με, μὴ μ' ἀγριοκυττάξεις.

Κ' ἐδάκρυζεν ὁ δαίμονας, ἔσερνε τὰ μαλλιά του,
κ' ἔδερνε τὰ πλευρά του.
Τὸν πιίγει τὸ παράπονο, τὸ μέτωπο ἐχτυποῦσε
καὶ μέσα του ἐγελοῦσε.
Μέν' ἡ Φροσύν' ἀκλόνητη, τὰ χέρια σταυρωμένα,
δὲ σκιάζεται κανένα.
Ἐκύτταζε τὸ κόνισμα, τὴ μόνη τῆς ἐλπίδα,
καὶ βλέπει μίαν ἀχτίδα,
ποῦ βγαίνει ἀπὸ τὴ Δέσποινα κ' ἔρχεται, τὴ φωτίζει.
Τὴν εἶδε κι ὁ Ἀλήτσας καὶ τρέμει καὶ μουνγκρίζει.

Φροσύνη

Σήκου, Βεζύρη, κ' εἶν' ἀργά! Δέν ἔχω ἐδῶ σιμά μου
οὔτε πατέρα, οὔτ' ἀδερφό, οὔτε παιδιά, οὔτ' ἄντρα,
τὸν κόσμο τὸν ἀρνήθηκα. Χάρου τὴ δύναμί σου,
τὴ δόξα σου, τὰ πλοῦτή σου, κι ἄφες με νὰ πεθάνω
στὴ σκοτεινιά μου ἡσυχῇ. Ἄλλο καλὸ δὲ θέλω.

Frossini, love me, soon I'll die,
Yannena is yours, everything is yours.
I am taking nothing in the deep dark tomb, nothing;
spend nothing for me Frosso,
but a couple of lengths for my shroud and your last kiss.
Show compassion, you are like a God to me.
Hitherto in Him I never believed but now I do.
I believe in your icon, in Virgin Mary,
in baptism, your myrrh, I believe that there is
a higher power that created you, Frossini.
My Prophet I reject so that I would come
with you to heaven and to feel
in my last moment your lovely hands joining mine.
Tell me, what else do you wish. What else do you want?
Frossini, look at my eyes... Bless you,
you filled them with tears... My child, don't leave me.
Children I have not, they are gone, who knows if they'll return!
Pity me the doleful, have me as a... father.
Come, Frossini, compassionately look after this old man.
Have pity on me, don't stare in rage.

Tearful the demon is pulling his hair
and is thrashing his ribs.
He chokes in moans, strikes his forehead
but he is stealthily laughing.
Frossini stays firm with her hands crossed
she fears nobody.
Looking at the icon, her only hope,
she sees a beam
emerging from the Madonna to illuminate her.
Seeing it, Ali Pasha trembles and bellows.

Frossini

Stand up Vizier, it's late! I have by me
no father, no brother, no child, no husband,
I denied the world. Enjoy your power,
your fame, your riches and let me die
alone in dark oblivion. I wish nothing more.

Τραβήξου τώρα, κύτταξε, Βιζύρη, τὴν Παρθένο·
δὲ σέ φοβίζει τοῦ Θεοῦ τὸ φοβερὸ τὸ μάτι;

Ἀλῆς

Δὲ μὲ φοβίζ' ἡ κόλαση, ποῦ μ' ἀναψες στὰ στήθη,
καὶ θὰ φοβίσουν τὸν Ἀλῆ τὰ ξύλα κ' ἡ ἀχτίδες;
Φροσύνη, ἐπαρακάλεσα, ἐκλαψα τόσῃν ὥραν,
Θυμῆσου πῶς τὰ δάκρυα τάσωσα, δὲν ἔχ' ἄλλα...

Ὁρθὸς μὲ μιάς σηκώνεται, τὸ πάτημά του παίρνει.
Τί λύσσα τότε δέρνει!
Τὰ χεῖλη του ἐκοκκίνησαν, λὲς κ' εἶναι ματωμένα
καὶ τρέμουνε κλεισμένα.
Ἐγρύλλωσε τὰ μάτια του, βογγῇ, φουσιμανάει
σὰ λύκος, ποῦ διψάει.
Ἐτρίξανε τὰ δόντια του καὶ τᾶκουσε ἡ Φροσύνη.
Ἀρχίζει πόλεμος σκληρός. Παρθέν', ἐλεημοσύνη!

Φροσύνη

Ἀλήπασα, μὴ βλασφημῆς θυμῆσου πῶς ὑπάρχει
ἕνας Θεὸς καὶ τῶδωκα σήμερα τὴν ψυχὴ μου.

Ἀλῆς

Καὶ τὸ Θεό σου τὸ Μουχτάρ, Φροσύνη, τὸν ἀρνήθης;
Εἶναι ἠωπά τὰ χεῖλη σου ἀκόμη ἀπ' τὰ φιλιὰ του·
τὰ δάχτυλα, ποῦ ἐσφίξανε τὸν κόρφο, τὸ λαιμό σου,
ἀφήκαν τὰ σημάδια τους· τὰ βλέπω, τὰ χωρίζω.
Καὶ σὺ τὸν ἐλησμόνησες καὶ παίρνεις ἐραστὴ σου
τὸ φάντασμα, ποῦ κάθεται στὸν οὐρανό, στὰ νέφη;
Ἀνατριχιάζεις ποῦ μ' ἀκοῦς; Τὸ βλέπεις, δὲ φοβοῦμαι,
Φροσύνη, τὴν εἰκόνα σου. Ἴσως στὸν ἄλλον κόσμον
νὰν ὁ Θεός σου δυνατός, ἐδῶ κανένας ἄλλος
μπρὸς στὸ Βιζύρη τὸν Ἀλῆ δὲ ζῇ καὶ δὲν ὀρίζει.
Εἶσαι δική μου, θὰ τὸ ἴδῃς. Ἐταξα τῆς καρδιάς μου
ἀπόψε στὸ κρεβάτι μου χάρισμα νὰ σέ δώσω.

64

Pull yourself away, look, Vizier, at the Virgin;
are you not scared of God's awesome eye?

Ali

The hell you sparked in my chest doesn't frighten me,
Ali is not terrified by wood and rays;
Frossini, I begged you, I cried.
I expended all my tears, I have no more...

At once he rises, takes a step.
What rage comes upon him!
His lips are reddened, as if they bled
and sealed they tremble.
With eyes distorted, he bellows, blusters
like a thirsty wolf.
Frossini heard his grinding teeth.
A ruthless war is afoot. Virgin Mary, mercy!

Frossini

Ali Pashia, do not curse; remember, there exists
a God to whom today I gave my soul.

Ali

And your god Mouchtar, Frossini, do you forsake him?
Your lips from his kisses are still wet;
his fingers that pressed your breasts, your neck,
left their marks; I see them, I recognize them.
Did you forget him and take for a lover
the ghost, dwelling in the sky, in the clouds?
Why do you shiver to these words? You see I am not afraid
of your icon, Frossini. In the world to come, perhaps,
your God is strong; here nobody else
but Ali the Vizier lives and rules.
You are mine, you will see. I vowed to my heart
to offer you tonight to my bed.

65

Μάθε καὶ σὺ πῶς ὁ Ἄλῆς τὸ τάζει καὶ τὸ κάνει.
Φροσύνη, ἐπαρακάλεσα, ἐφίλησα τὸ χῶμα,
ποῦ ἐπάτησε τὸ πόδι σου. Δυστυχισμένη ποῦσαι!
Τώρα θὰ ἰδοῦμε ποιὸς Θεὸς καὶ ποιά Κυρά Παρθένο
θὰ μ' ἐμποδίσῃ τὰ φτερά σὰν ἀετὸς ν' ἀπλώσω,
νὰ καταπέσω ἐπάνω σου στὰ νύχια νὰ σὲ πάρω!
Φροσύνη, ἔφυγε ὁ Μουχτάρ καὶ φεύγοντας δὲ μοῦπε
παρ' ὅλη τὴν ἀγάπη μου σ' ἐσέ, σ' ἐσέ νὰ δώσω.
Σοῦ τήνε δίδω, τὴν πατεῖς ... τί μένει στὸν πατέρα; ...

Φροσύνη

Δάγκασε, δάγκασε, σκορπιέ, τὴ δίψα σου νὰ σβύσῃς.
βύζαξ' ἀπὸ τὴ φλέβα μου, βόφηξε τὸ φαρμάκι,
ποῦ ἐπότισες τὸ αἷμα μου, γενιὰ καταραμένη.
Ἐπὶ σὲ σκιάζομαι. Φονεῖά, τί μέ κυττάζεις;

Ἄλῆς

Φροσύνη, δὲ μὲ σκιάζεσαι; Ποιὸς ἀνθρώπος στὸν κόσμο
τέτοιον λόγο ἐπρόφερε κ' ἠμπόρεσε νὰ ζήσῃ;
καὶ σὺ θὰ ζήσῃς, δύστυχη, θὰ ζήσῃς στὸ πλευρό μου.
Μὴ μὲ σκληραίνεις, ἀκουσε τὰ λόγια τὰ στερινά μου.
Ἀγάπησέ με, δώσέ μου ἓνα φιλή, Φροσύνη,
ἄλλο γι' ἀπόψε δὲ ζητῶ φιλοῦν τοὺς πεθαμμένους,
καὶ σὺ δὲν καταδέχεσαι νὰ ρίξῃς, νὰ πετάξῃς
σ' ἐμένα, ποῦμαι ζωντανός, ἓνα φιλή γιὰ χάρι!

Φροσύνη

Ἄν μ' ἔκαμινεν ἡ μάνα μου ὀχιά, μονομερίδα,
θὰ σ' ἐφιλοῦσα, πίστεψε, Βιζύρη, μὲς στὸ στόμα.

Ἄλῆς

Ἄν ἔφταιξεν ἡ μάνα σου, Φροσύνη, τί σοῦ φταίω;
Τὴ χάρι, ποῦ ἐπεθύμησες, τὴν ἔχω ἐγὼ γιὰ σένα.
Μ' ἔκαμ' ἡ Χάμκω δράκοντα, ἀστρίτη κι ἀκονάκι.
Ἄς σμίξωμε τὰ χεῖλη μας, ἔλα νὰ μοιρασθοῦμε
τὸ χάρισμα τῆς μάνας μου. Τὸ μαῦρό μου φαρμάκι,

Be assured that what Ali promises he delivers.
Frossini, I begged you, I kissed the ground
you walked on. You are despondent!
Now we will see which God and which Virgin Mary
will restrain me from spreading my wings like an eagle
and fall on you and catch you in my talons!
Frossini, as he departed, Mouchtar told me
to give you all my love.
I offer it to you, you throw it away ... what is left for me ... ?

Frossini

Bite, sting, quench your thirst, scorpion
suckle my vein, suck the poison
you injected in my blood, damn your generation.
Tonight I am not frightened. Look at me, murderer.

Ali

Frossini, have you no fear of me? Who in the world
uttered such words and lived to tell about it?
But you, miserable, will live by my side.
Don't harden me, listen to my last words.
Love me, Frossini, grant me a kiss,
tonight that is all I seek. Even the dead are kissed,
and you don't condescend to throw, to fling
a kiss to me, who is alive?

Frossini

Had my mother spawned an adder
believe me in an instant your mouth I would kiss.

Ali

If your mother failed you, Frossini it is not my fault.
But what you yearn for I will grant.
Hamko made me dragon, astriti, akonaki.⁷
Let's join our lips, let's share
my mother's gift. My black poison,

σάν μυστικόνε θησαυρό, τὸ φύλαξα ὥς τὰ τώρα
κρυφά μέσα στὴ γλῶσσά μου. Τὸ θέλεις; Σοῦ τὸ δίδω ...

.....
Ὅρμᾶ καὶ πέφτει ἐπάνω της, κρεμίζεται στὸ λαιμό της.
παλαίβουνε, τὰ δυὸ στοιχεῖα, ἔγκλημα κι ἀθωότης.
καὶ μάχονται καὶ πολεμοῦν ποῖο τᾶλλο νὰ χαλάσῃ.
Μὲ καρδιοχτύπι τρομερὸ τὰ κύτταζεν ἡ πλάση.
Κρυφὴ ἀχτίδα φεγγαριοῦ, ἀχνὴ καὶ φοβισμένη
διαβαίνει τὸ παράθυρο καὶ τρέμοντας προσμένει
νὰ ἰδῇ τὴ μάχη τῆ φριχτῆ, τῇ μαύρῃ ἀνεμοζάλῃ,
νὰ μάθῃ ἂν πρέπει νὰ σβυσθῇ, ποτὲ νὰ μὴ προβάλῃ.
ἢ ἄγγελος στὸν οὐρανὸ χρυσὰ φτερά ν' ἀπλώσῃ,
τῆς νίκης τῆς ἀνέλπιστας τὴν εἶδῃσι νὰ δώσῃ.
Τὰ νυχτοπούλια γρούζουνε, χτυποῦνε τὰ φτερά τους
καὶ δείχνουν τὴ χαρὰ τους.

Χαμογελοῦν τὰ ροδαλά τῆς Δέσποινας τὰ χεῖλη,
σπιθοβολεῖ καὶ χαίρεται τὸ φῶς μὲς στὸ καινὸ ἔλγ.
καὶ ζωντανεύει ἡ φλόγα του καὶ λὲς πῶς θὰ ν' ἀστράψῃ,
πῶς θὰ νὰ γένῃ κεραυνὸς τὸ δαίμονα νὰ κάψῃ.
Τὰ βάλια, ποῦ τὸ κόνισμα στολίζουν μαραμμένα,
τώρα βλαστήσανε χλωρὰ καὶ φαίνοντ' ἀνθισμένα.
Ἡ δάφνη τους πρασίνισε, δὲν τρίβεται, δὲν τρίζει
καὶ στεφανώνει τὴν Κυρά, μοσχοβολᾷ, μυρίζει
ἕνα πουλί, π' ἀνάθρεψε μὲς στὸ κλουβὶ ἡ Φροσύνη,
ποῦ τοῦχε μάθει τὸ κεχρὶ στὸ στόμα νὰ τοῦ δίνῃ,
στὸν ὕπνο του ξαφνίζεται, χτυπιέται, ἀναφτεργιάζει
καὶ τὴν κυρά του κράζει.

Ἀκολουθοῦσε ὁ πόλεμος, καὶ τοῦ φονεῖα τὸ χέρι
αἱμάτωσε στὸ πρόσωπο τὸ μαῦρο περιστέρι.
Ἐκρέματο στὰ νύχια του τὸ δέριμα τῆς κομμάτια.
σάν ἀναμμένα κάρβουνα ἐλάμπανε τὰ μάτια.
Τὴν ἔδεσε στὰ χέρια του, τὴ σφίγγει, τὴν πλακώνει
καὶ γιὰ ν' ἀρπάξῃ τὸ φιλὶ τὰ χεῖλη του τεντώνει.
Βλέπει τὸ αἷμα πῶσταζε, νοιώθει τὴ μυρωδιά του
κ' ἐξύπνησε περσότερο ἡ δίψα στὴν καρδιά του.
Φουσκόνουν, ἀναδεύονται ἡ φλέβες στὸ λαιμὸ του
κι ἀστράφτει ἕνα χαμόγελο πικρὸ στὸ πρόσωπό του.

like a secret treasure I've kept till now
hidden in my tongue. Would you taste it? Come ...

.....
Lunging, he grabs her by the throat,
the two ghosts, crime and innocence, wrestle
and clash and brawl to destroy each other.
The world watches with heart throbbing.
A beam, a dreg of a pale and fearful moon,
pierces the window and trembling is awaiting
the horrible battle's, the dark whirlwind's end.
Will it fade away never to appear,
or like a heavenly angel will spread golden wings,
to bring the news of a startling victory?
The night birds vociferate, flap their wings
and show their joy.

The Madonna's rosy lips smile,
the light in the lamp sparkles and rejoices,
the flame quickens as if to crackle
into a lightning bolt to burn the demon.
The withered palm branches, which adorn the icon,
spring up fresh, they appear effloresced.
The dry laurel becomes green,
a fragrant crown with a sweet smell.
A bird that Frossini bred
and with millet fed
wakes up startled, flutters
and its lady calls.

The battle raged and the killer's hand
bled the face of the dove.
From his nails her flesh is hanging in pieces;
like burning coal his eyes shine.
He locks her in his hands, he clasps her, crushes her;
to plunder a kiss his lips extend.
He sees blood dropping, senses its scent
and in his heart his thirst further awakes.
His throat veins swell and stir,
a bitter smile shines on his face;

ἀκόμη δὲν τὴν ἔγγισε ... σιμά της ἀνασαίνει
κι ἀπὸ μακρὰ χορταίνει.

Τὰ χεῖλῃ του ἐπλησίασαν ... «Παρθένε, βοήθησέ με!»
ἐφώνησεν ἡ δύστυχη. «Κυρά μου, λύτρωσέ με!»
Κ' εὐθὺς στὰ δυὸ τὰ χέρια της, ἀδύνατα καὶ κρύα,
ἀνέλπιστη κατέβηκεν ἡ δύναμις ἡ θεία,
καὶ λυέται καὶ τινάζεται καὶ φεύγει τοῦ φονεῖα της.
Τὴν ἔχασε ὁ Ἀλήπασας. Κυττάζει ... τὰ μαλλιά της
ἐλάμπανε στὸν ὄμο της. Ἐτρώμαζε, τοῦ ἐφάνη
πῶς εἶδε στὸ κεφάλι της τὸ μυστικὸ στεφάνι.
Τὸ φοβερὸ τὰμάρτημα, ὅπου εἶχε μελετήσει,
τὰνάφτει πάλαι στὴν καρδιά καὶ θέλει νὰ νικήσῃ.
Ἐδάγκωσε τὰ δάχτυλα, τὴ σάρκα του ξεσχίζει
καὶ βλασφημᾷ μουγκρίζει.

Καὶ τρέχει, τρέχει ἐπάνω της, ὁρμᾷ νὰ τὴνε φθάσῃ,
καὶ δὲ μπορεῖ τὸ φάντασμα στὰ δάχτυλα νὰ πιάσῃ.
Σημαίνουν τὰ μεσάνυχτα, ἐλάλησε τὸρνίθι
κ' ἐκεῖν' ἡ ὥρα τῶδωκε νέαν ψυχὴ στὰ στήθη.
Σὰ νυχτερίδα ἐπέταξε, τὴν ἔχει, τὴν ἀρπάζει
κι ἐκεῖ, ποῦ στέκει ἡ Δέσποινα μ' ὁρμὴ τὴνε τινάζει.
Ῥίχνει τὸ χέρι στὸ λαιμὸ καὶ τᾶλλο τὸ σηκώνει
καὶ τὴ μητέρα τοῦ Θεοῦ χτυπᾷ καὶ φασκελώνει.
Κρημνίζεται τὸ κόνισμα, ἐσβόσθη τὸ καινὸν ...
Τὰ νυχτοπούλια βυάζονται σὰ λυσσασμένοι σκύλοι·
πέφτουν τὰ βέργα ἐπάνω του, τοῦ δέρνουν τὸ κεφάλι,
τόνε ταραίζει ζάλη.

Ἐθόλωσαν τὰ μάτια του, τηράζει ὀλόγυρά του,
τροιάρ' ἀκατονόγητ σφίγγει τὸ λάρυγγά του.
Θέλει ν' ἀπλώσῃ στ' ἄρματα, θυμάται τὸ μαχαῖρι,
κι εἶναι βαρὺ σὰ σίδηρο, παράλυτο τὸ χέρι.
Μένει βουβὸς ὁ ἄθεος, σὰ μάρμαρο, σὰν ξύλο·
τρίζει ἡ καρδιά στὰ στήθη του σὰ μααραμμένο φύλλο,
καὶ δὲν τολμᾷ νὰ κινηθῇ καὶ δὲν τολμᾷ νὰ κρίνῃ,
Μήπως ἀκούσῃ τὴ φωνή, τὸ χτύπο του ἡ Φροσύνη.
Θαμμένως ὀλοζώντανος, βαθεῖα μέσα στὸν ἄδη,
φορεῖ γιὰ μαῦρο σάβανο τῆς νύχτας τὸ σκοτάδι
καὶ κρύβεται, μαζώνεται ἄφωνος σὰν τὸ πτώμα,
ποῦ τὸ σκεπάζει χῶμα.

Still without a kiss ... he breathes near her
from afar content.

His lips are near ... "Virgin, help!"
cried the poor. "My Lady, deliver me!"
To her immobilized and cold hands
divine power came at once.
Freeing herself she leaps and escapes from the reprobate.
Ali Pasha lost her. He looks around ... her hair
on her shoulders glows. Startled, he thought he saw
a mystical crown on her head.
The terrible sin he had in mind,
ignites again his heart, he wants victory.
He bites his fingers, tears his flesh,
he bellows a curse.

He runs, rushes to reach her
but he cannot grasp the ghost with his fingers.
Midnight strikes, the rooster crows;
this hour gives new soul to his chest.
He flies like a bat, he grabs her
and with vehemence shakes her by the icon stand.
He casts one hand on her throat and with the other
gesticulates and hits God's mother.
The icon falls, its light goes out.
The nocturnal birds squawk like mad dogs.
The palm branches fall and strike his head,
a sudden daze shakes him.

With eyes dimmed he looks around,
an unfathomable terror tightens his throat.
He remembers his knife and reaches for his arms
but heavy as iron are his paralyzed hands.
Dumbstruck he stands, the infidel, like wood, like marble;
his heart creaking like a dry leaf
he dares not move, he dares not reason
for fear of being heard by Frossini.
Buried alive deep in hell
wearing the darkness of the night as his black shroud
he hides, recoils, speechless like a corpse
covered by the earth.

Τρισκότειδο καὶ σιωπῇ Ἀπέθαναν ἡ ζοῦνε: ...
Μὲς στὸ κανδηλὶ τῆς Κυράς ἡ σπύλαις ξεφυχοῦνε·
λάμπουν ἀκόμη μιὰ φορά, τρέμουνε, ψυθυρίζουν
ἕνα κρυφὸ χαϊρέτισμα καὶ σβύνονται καὶ καπνίζουν.
Ἄβυσσος, πίσσα ἐσφράγιζε τὰ μάτια τοῦ Βιζύρη·
μόν' ἡ ἀχτίδα, πῶμβαυε ἀπὸ τὸ παραθύρι,
σάν ἄλλο δάχτυλο Θεοῦ, τὰχνὸ τὸ φῶς τῆς χύνει,
σπιθοβολεὶ χαρούμενη καὶ δείχνει στὴ Φροσύνη
ἕνα μαχαίρι ὀλόχρυσο στὴ μέση τοῦ φοιναῖα τῆς.
Σὰν ἀστραπὴ τοῦ τάρπαξε, πῶχει στὰ δάχτυλά τῆς
καὶ τὸ κρατεῖ μὲ δύναμι κ' ἐμπρὸς τοῦ τὸ τινάζει
καὶ τρομερὰ φωνάζει.

«Μὴ παραχθῆς, Ἀλήπασα, δὲ βλέπεις στὸ πλευρό μου
ποῖον ἔχω βοηθό μου;
Τὸ χινωτό σου κατάπιε το, τὸ θέλω, τὸ προστάζω.
Νὰ μὴν ἐγγίση ἐπάνω μου, Ἀλῆ, γιατί σὲ σφάζω».

Κ' ἐν ᾧ τὸν ἐφοβέριζε κ' ἐν ᾧ νικᾷ τὸ φεῖδι,
χωρὶς νὰ θέλῃ τὸν κεντᾷ μὲ τὸ χρυσὸ λεπίδι.
Γνωρίζει τὸ μαχαίρι τοῦ στὸ κρῶ κέντημά του,
ἡ σάρκα τοῦ ἀνατρίχασεν, ἐπάγωσε ἡ καρδιά του.
Ὶέει τὸ αἷμά του ζεστό, τὴν τραχηλιά του βρέχει
κ' ἐπάνω του σὰν ἐρπετὸ γλυστρά κρυφὰ καὶ τρέχει.
Ὶεκαμὲ ἡ χάρις τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τοῦ φωτός τὸ βλέμμα
δὲν εἶδε, δὲν ἐγνώρισε τ' Ἀλήπασα τὸ αἷμα.
Ὶ νύχτα, ποῦ τὸ κύτταξε, σὰν Ὶδης μελανιάζει
καὶ μὲ μαυρίλα τρομερὴ τὸ πρόσωπο σκεπάζει.
Ὶγνώρισε τὸ θάνατο. Σὰν ἄσπονδος ἐχθρός του
ὁ Χάρος στέκει ἐμπρὸς του.

Πέφτει στὴ γῆ καὶ σέρνεται μακρ' ἀπὸ τὴ Φροσύνη,
θέλει νὰ κράξῃ τὸν Ταχίρ, καὶ δὲν τολμᾷ νὰ κρίνῃ.
Σέρνεται πάντα σὰ σκορπιός, τὸ σκότος ψηλαφίζει,
βρίσκει τὴ θύρα ἀνέλιπτα, ἀπλώνει τὴν ἐγγίζει.
Ὶγάλια, ἀγάλια σκόνεται ὀλόρθος καὶ κυττάζει,
κάνεις δὲν τὸν ἀκλούθησε, κάνεις δὲν τόνε κράζει.
Σιγῇ, σιγῇ βαθύτατη, καὶ μόνου σὲ μιάν ἀκρῇ
ἀκούει κάτι, ποῦ Ὶσταξε στὸ πάτωμα σὰ δάκρυ,
καὶ λίγα λόγια ἀπόκρυφα σὰν κ' ἐπαρακαλοῦσε
ἡ Φρόσω τὴν Παρθένο τῆς καὶ τὴν εὐχαριστοῦσε.

Deep darkness and silence! Are they alive or dead? ...
In the icon's votive lamp the sparks
shine one more time, tremble,
croon a secret farewell and go up in smoke.
The Vizier's eyes are sealed, it is all pitch black now;
except for the moonlight's beam,
which like God's finger throws a glint,
and joyfully sparkling shows to her
in the waist of the slayer a golden knife.
Fast as lightning she seizes it, she has it in her fingers.
Forcefully holding it she points it on him
and dreadfully she screams.

"Do not trouble Ali Pasha, can't you see
whom as helper I have on my side?
I want you to swallow your breath, I command it.
For I will slaughter you if it touches me."

And while she was menacing him,
and while she is defeating the snake,
unwittingly she pricks him with the golden blade.
The icy piercing of his knife Ali recognizes,
his flesh shivered, his heart froze.
Warm his blood wells, soaking his collar
and slides on him slyly as a reptile.
As if of God's grace, the glance of light
did not recognize Ali Pasha's blood.
But the night sensed it and at its sight
becomes livid and frightful darkness.
He recognizes death. Like a relentless enemy
Death stands before him.

To the earth he drops and drags himself away from Frossini.
He wants to cry out to Tahir, but he does not dare.
He keeps dragging himself like a scorpion, groping the darkness;
unexpectedly he finds the door, he reaches, he touches it.
Slowly, slowly he stands upright and looks.
Nobody followed him, nobody is calling after him.
Silence, deepest silence, and only in a corner
he hears something faint, like a tear dripping on the floor,
and a few private words,
Frossini calling on and thanking the Virgin.

"Όσο μακρὸ κ' ἂν ἦτανε τὸ φοβερὸ τὸ χέρι,
δὲν φθάνει τὸ μαχαῖρι.

«Ταχὴρ, Ταχὴρ, ἐφώνασε, τρέχα σ' ἐμέ, Ταχὴρ!
Τρεχάτε, πῶς δὲ φαίνεσθε; Θὰ σφάζουν τὸ Βιζιέρη»
Πλακώνει ἡ ἄλλη κόλασις, Ταχὴρης καὶ φουειάδες
μὲ τὰ σπαθιά ξεγύμνωτα, μὲ φῶτα, μὲ λαμπάδες,
καὶ βλέπουν τὸν Ἀλήπασα χλωμὸ σὰ θειαφοκέρι
καὶ τὴ Φροσύνη ἀκίνητη, ποὺ ἐβάστα τὸ μαχαῖρι.
Ὅμοῦν νὰ τὴν ἀρπάξουν, νὰ τὴν καταπιῶν·
ἡ Φρόσω δὲν ἐσάλεψε κ' ἐκεῖνοι δὲν τολμοῦνε.
Μὲ μιὰ ματιά τοῦ Ἀλήπασα ποὺ πάλαι ζωντανεύει,
ἔμειναν ὅλοι ἀκίνητοι, κάνεις τοὺς δὲ σαλεύει.
Χτυποῦν, σφυρίζουν τὰ σπαθιά, φωλεύουνε στὴ θήκη,
καὶ καρτεροῦν οἱ λύκοι.

.....
Ἄλῃς

Παιδιά μου, μὲ προφθάσατε στὴν ὥρα τὴ στερινὴ μου.
Ἀπόψε, μὲ ξεθάψετε. Νάχετε τὴν εὐχή μου!
Ἐμείνα ἔρμος κι ἄχαρος τώρα στὰ γερατειά μου·
μακρά, μακρά στὸν πόλεμο ἐπῆγαν τὰ παιδιά μου.
Ἐψὲς μὲς στὰ μεσάνυχτα ἦλθ' ὁ Μουχτάρ σ' ἐμένα
μ' ἐντροπαλὸ τὸ πρόσωπο, μὲ βλέφαρα κλαμμένα
μ' ἀγκάλιασε, μ' ἐφίλησε, μ' ἀνοῖξε τὴν ψυχὴ του
καὶ μοῦ γυρεύει γιatriκὸ γιὰ μιὰ σκληρὴ πληγὴ του.
Μοῦ λέγει πῶς ἀγάπησεν, ἀνάθεμα τὴν ὥρα,
ὅπου δὲν εἶναι τὸς ἐδῶ, νὰ τὴ γνωρίσῃ τώρα,
μιὰν ἄπιστη, μιὰ Χριστιανή... κυττάξετε, εἶν' ἐκείνη.
Μὲ παρακάλεσε θερμὰ νὰ πάρω τὴ Φροσύνη
καὶ νὰ τὴν ἔχω σὰν παιδί. Ἀδύνατος πατέρας,
ἔταξα μὲς στὸν κόρφο μου νὰ κρύψω αὐτὸ τὸ τέρας.
Ἦλθα μαζὶ σας νὰ τὴν δῶ, κ' ἐκεῖ ποῦ μ' ἀγκαλιάζει
καὶ μὲ καλεῖ πατέρα της, κρυφά, κρυφά μὲ σφάζει.
Ἀρπάξε τὸ μαχαῖρί μου· βλέπετε τὴν πληγὴ μου;
Παιδιά μου, μὲ προφθάσατε. Νάχετε τὴν εὐχή μου!

Yes, Ali's fearful arm was long
but the knife cannot reach.

Tahir, Tahir, he cried out, run to me Tahir!
Where are you all?
They will slaughter your Vizier!
Then hell amasses. Tahir and the killers
with naked swords, with lanterns, with torches,
run in to find Ali Pasha pale like a sulfur candle
and Frossini motionless holding the knife.
To grab her they dash, to devour her.
Frosso did not move, and they do not dare.
Ali Pasha, who again comes alive, sends a look
and all remained still, nobody moves.
The swords clank and hiss as they go nesting in their sheaths,
and the wolves wait.

.....
Ali

My children, you got to me at my final hour.
Tonight you unburied me. Have my blessing!
I was left helpless and graceless now in my old age.
Far, far to war my children have gone.
Yesterday at midnight Mouchtar came to me
his face bashful, with moist eyelids
he embraced me, he kissed me, his soul opened to me
and a remedy for a cruel pain he seeks from me.
He tells me in love he has fallen, accursed be the hour
that he is not now here to see her,
an infidel, a Christian... look, here she is.
He fervently pleaded with me to take Frossini,
to have her as my child. I was a weak father
and to myself I vowed to conceal this beast.
I came to see her, but while she is embracing me
and father she calls me, covertly, slyly she cuts me.
She grabbed my knife; see my wound?
My children, you came on time. Have my blessing!

Σιωπηλή στην άκρη της ἔστεκεν ἡ Φροσύνη,
ἄκουσεν, ἐγονάτισε καὶ τὸ μαχαίρι ἀφίνει.
«Παρθένο μου, σπλαχνίσου με, Κυρά μου μὴ μ' ἀφήσης.
Κ' ἔλα μ' ἕνα χαμόγελο τὰ μάτια μου νὰ κλείσης».

Ἄλῃς

Ταχὴρ, πιστέ μου, τήραξε! Ποιὸς ἤθελε πιστέψῃ
Παιδιά 'ς ἐκεῖα τὰ στήθη της πὼς ἤθελ' ἀναθρέψῃ!
Γὰ δύστυχα τάρνῆθηκε μικρά, παραιτημένα,
ἐπάνω κάτω σέρνονται γυμνά καὶ πεινασμένα.
Τάπάντησα 'ς τὸ δρόμο μου κ' ἐπόνεσε ἡ ψυχὴ μου,
τοῖς ἔδωκα νὰ πάρουνε ψωμὶ καὶ τὴν εὐχὴ μου.
Κι' ἀπόψε μὲ τὸ αἷμά μου ἠθέλησε ἡ Φροσύνη
νὰ μοῦ πληρώσῃ τριδιπλά τὴν ἐλεημοσύνη!
Πέτε μου σεῖς, παιδάκια μου, τ' Ἀλήπασα τί μένει;

.....
"Ὅλοι ἐφώναξαν μὲ μιάς· «Να σώσῃ κρεμασμένη»

Ἄλῃς

"Ὅχι, πιστοὶ μου, τί θὰ πῇ τὸ μαῦρο τὸ παιδί μου;
«Πατέρα μου, ἐλησμόνησες πὼς ἦτανε δική μου
κ' ἐπήγες καὶ τὴν ἔδειξες στὸ φῶς ξεγυμνωμένη,
μ' ἕνα σχοινὶ στὴν τραχηλιά, σὲ ξύλο κρεμασμένη;
Πατέρα, δὲν ἐντράπηκες γιὰ μέ, τὰ κρέατά της
νὰ ἴδῃ, ποῦ ἐλαχταρίζανε, ὁ κόσμος ὁ διαβάτης;
Πατέρα μου, ἄλλος θάνατος, ἐχάθηκε, δὲν μένει;

.....
Κ' ἐκεῖνοι πάλ' ἐφώναξαν· «Στὴ λίμνη πιυμένη»

Ἄλῃς

Παιδιά μου, θεία φώτισις! Τὸ δροσερὸ τὸ κύμα
ἄς λάβῃ, ἄς λάβῃ ἡ δύστυχη κρεββάτι της καὶ μνήμα.
Εἶναι διπλὸ τὸ κρίμά της. Τὸ αἷμα τὸ πιστό μας
ἐμόλυνε σὰ Χριστιανή, ἔβρισε τὸ Θεό μας,
ἐπρόδωκε τὸν ἄνδρα της, ἔκλεψε τὸ παιδί μου.

Tacit in the corner Frossini stood.
She listened, kneeled and dropped the knife.
"Virgin, have compassion, my Lady, do not desert me.
With a smile come to close my eyes."

Ali

Tahir, my faithful, look! Who would have thought
she would want to raise children on those breasts!
She abandoned her children, when still little, and now alone
here and there they crawl naked and hungry.
I encountered them on the way and my soul pained,
I gave them bread and my blessing.
And tonight with my blood Frossini wished
to pay me for my almsgiving in double and triple!
Tell me, what is Ali Pasha to do?

.....
All in unison clamored "Hanged she ends!"

Ali

No, my faithful, what will my poor child say?
"Did you forget, my father, that mine she was
and naked you unveiled her in the bright light,
with a rope on her neck, hanging from the gallows?
Father, weren't you ashamed for me
to expose her flesh to the world the passerby?
My father, a more apposite death could not be found?"

.....
And then again they clamored "Drowned in the lake!"

Ali

My children, what a divine enlightening! Let the cool waves
receive her, let the unfortunate have them as bed and tomb.
Double her sin is. This Christian woman tainted
our good blood, reviled our God,
she betrayed her husband, my child she deceived.

Έγώ τήνε συχώρεσα. Για μέ, για τή ζωή μου
 εκδίκηση δέ σάς ζητώ, δέ θέλω άλλη παιδεία.
 Ποτέ δέν ἐμετάνιωσα σάν ἔκαμα ἐσπλαχνία.
 Αὔριο βράδυ πρὶν νά βγῇ στὸν οὐρανὸ ἡ σελήνη,
 ὕπνο βαθὺ κι ἀτάραχο νά χαίρεται ἡ Φροσύνη.
 Μαζὶ σας τώρα πάρτε την, πιάστε την μὲ γλυκάδα
 Μὴ τύχη καὶ χαλάσετε μιὰ τέτοιαν εὐμορφάδα.
 Μὴ σφίξετε τὰ χέρια της, ποὺν' ἀπαλὰ σὰ χιόνι,
 Βρέξετε λίγο τὸ σχοινί, νά μὴ τήνε πληγόνῃ.
 Σηκώστε την στὴν ἀγκαλιά, γιὰ νά μὴν ἀποστάσῃ,
 κι ἀγάλια, ἀγάλια ἀπλώστε την τῇ μαύρῃ νά ἡσυχάσῃ.
 Ὁ γιὸς μου τὴν ἀγάπησε, τὴν εἶχε μαθημένη
 ἀπὸ νυφάδαις εὐμορφαῖς νάναι τριγυρισμένη.
 Δέ θέλω, ἐγ' ὁ πατέρας του, ν' ἀφήσω τῇ Φροσύνῃ
 ἔρημῃ κι ὀλαμόναχῃ μέσ' στὸ νερό νά μείνῃ,
 νά σκιάζεται στὸν ὕπνο της, στὸ βράχο νά χτυπιέται,
 χωρὶς νάχῃ ἕνα σύντροφο, καὶ νά μὲ καταριέται.
 Δ ε κ ά ξ η νά διαλέξετε ἀπ' ὅσαις τῇ γνωρίζουν
 νά συντροφέουν τὴν κυρά, μ' ἀφροὺς νά τὴν στολίζουν.
 Νάν' ὅλαις πρωτοστέφαναις. Ἀπόψε θά ταῖς δώσω
 τῇ λίμνῃ μου γιὰ χάρισμα καὶ δέσποινα τῇ Φρόσω.
 Συρέτε νά ταῖς εὔρετε, συρέτε ἀπ' ὄνομά μου ...
 Ἀπόστασα, ἐδείλιασαν τὰχα καὶ κόκκαλά μου.
 Εἶμαι, παιδιὰ μου, γέροντας, θά πάγω νά ἡσυχάσω.
 Συρέτε μόνοι, δέ μπορῶ, παιδιὰ μου, νά σάς φθάσω.
 Φρόντισε σύ, Ταχίρη μου, τὰ λόγια μου θυμήσου ...
 Φροσύνη, καλονύχτισε, γλυκά, γλυκά κοιμήσου.

.....
 Ἐφύγ' ἐκεῖθε μοναχός. Τὰ μάτια του σηκώνει
 καὶ μιὰ βλαστήμια ἀνῆκουστη στὸν οὐρανὸ καρφώνει.
 «Σταυρέ, Σταυρέ, μ' ἐνίκησες! Χρώσταγε αὐτὴ τὴ χάρι
 σὲ μιὰ ... σὲ μιὰ Μαγδαληνῇ. Χαρά στὸ παλληκάρι,
 ποὺ ἐπάλεψε γιὰ σένα. Τώρα μ' ἐσὲ τριτόνει ...»

Ἡ γλῶσσά του ἔσταζε χολή, τὸ χῶμα φαρμακώνει.
 Ἀφρίζανε τὰ χεῖλῃ του, κρυφὴ κρυφὴ, τρομάρα
 ἔχωνε στὰ στήθη του. Σάν ἀδικη κατάρρα
 περιπλανᾶται μόνος του, σκοτάδι στὸ σκοτάδι.

I absolved her. For me, for my life
 revenge I do not request from you.
 I have never regretted showing compassion.
 Tomorrow at nightfall before the moon appears in the sky
 let Frossini delight in deep and tranquil sleep.
 Now take her with you, but treat her gently
 do not take any chance of spoiling such a beauty.
 Do not squeeze her hands, which are soft like snow,
 moisten the rope a little, not to cut her.
 Take her in your arms, lest she tires,
 and slowly, unhurriedly lay the hapless down to rest.
 My son loved her, he had her spoiled
 and surrounded her with beautiful young servants.
 My desire is not to abandon Frossini,
 deserted and all alone to make the deep her home,
 frightened in her sleep to be, upon the rock to rage,
 without a companion, cursing me.
 Choose sixteen from those who know Kyras
 to accompany her and deck her out in foams.
 All of them first-married. Today my lake as gift
 to them I will offer, and Frossini as their mistress.
 Go find them, go in my name ...
 I am tired, my miserable bones shrunk.
 I am, my children, an old man, I will go to rest.
 Go without me, I cannot catch up with you.
 Make sure, my Tahir, my words remember ...
 Frossini, the night is upon us, sweetly, sweetly go to sleep.

.....
 He left the room alone. His eyes lift
 and an unheard-of blasphemy upon the heavens he nails.
 "Cross, Cross, you vanquished me! Such a mercy only
 for some ... for some Magdalene was merited. Laudable I am
 fighting for you. Now I am equal to you ..."

Bile was dripping from his tongue poisoning the earth.
 His mouth was foaming and a hidden, hidden fright
 settled in his breast. Like an unjust curse
 lonesome he wanders, darkness in the dark.

Τοῦ φαίνεται ἀτελείωτο πῶς εἶν' ἐκεῖ τὸ βράδυ.
 Βουβό, βουβό τ' Ἀλήπασα διαβαίνει τὸ ποδάρι,
 ξυπνοὺν καὶ φεύγον τὰ ἔρπετά, κρυμμένα στὸ χορτάρι.
 Χωρὶς νὰ θέλει ἐπέρασε καὶ βλέπει στὸ πλευρό του
 γιγαντιαῖο φάντασμα, τὸ μαῦρο πλάτανό του.
 Τοῦ ἐφάνηκε ποὺ ἐγλίστρισε ... ἐσβύστηκε, τρομάζει
 κ' ἓνα κλαδάκι χαμηλὸ στὰ δάχτυλά του ἀρπάζει.
 Ἐσείστηκε ὁ πλάτανος, τὰ φύλλα τὰ ξερά του
 ἔτριξαν, ἀνέμισαν, σκορποῦν ὀλόγυρά του.
 Ὁ ἀνεμὸς ἀνάδενε τοῦ δένδρου τὰ κλωνάρια
 κ' οἱ ἴσκιους τοὺς μερμήγκιαζαν τ' Ἀλὴ μὲς τὰ ποδάρια.
 Τὰ μάτια του, ποὺ ἐθάμβωσαν, τὰ βλέπουν καὶ πιστεύουν
 πῶς εἶναι φεῖδια φτερωτά, ποὺ γύρου του χορεύουν.
 Χίνεται, φεύγει, ἐκάπνισε, καὶ λέγουν πῶς τὸ ξύλο,
 ποὺ ἐβάσταξε ὁ Ἀλήπασας, ποτὲ κανένα φύλλο
 ποτὲ δὲν ἐξεφύτρωσε, γυμνὸ, φωτοκαμμένο,
 ἔμεινε στεῖρο πάντοτε ὡς ἀφωρεσμένο.
 Ἐφῆσσε στὸ κρεβάτι του, ἀπλώνεται καὶ γέρνει,
 ὀλονυχτὶς τὸ μάτι του δὲν κλεί καὶ παραδέρνει.

Μόνοι ἐμείνανε οἱ φονειάδες, ἐκυττάξαν τὸν Ταχέρη
 καὶ κρυφὰ χαμογελοῦνε γιὰ τὰ λόγια τοῦ Βιζύρη·
 λὲς καὶ σκιάζονται κ' ἐκεῖνοι μιὰ γυναῖκα μοναχὴ
 καὶ προσμένουνε νὰ ἴδουνε τὸν Ταχὴρ νὰ κινηθῇ.

Εἰς τὴν ἄκρη τῆς κ' ἡ Φρόσω πάντοτε γουατισμένη
 δὲ στενάζει, δὲ δακρύζει καὶ σχεδὸν δὲν ἀνασαίνει.
 Μὲ τὰ χέρια σταυρωμένα, μὲ τὰ μάτια τῆς ψηλά,
 λὲς καὶ τώρα δὲ φοβεῖται νὰ τηράξῃ τὴν Κυρά.

Ἀπ' τὴν ὥρα, πῶχει ἀκούσῃ τὸ σκληρὸ τὸ θάνατό τῆς.
 Μιὰ οὐράνια γαλήνη πλημμυρεῖ τὸ πρόσωπό τῆς.
 Δὲν ἀνήκει πλεῖα τοῦ κόσμου, λὲς κ' ἐχάθη τὸ κορμὶ
 καὶ δὲ μένει στὴ Φροσύνη παρὰ κάλλος καὶ ψυχὴ.

The night seems endless to him.
 Silent, soundless, Ali Pasha's foot presses on.
 Reptiles awake and flee hiding in the grass.
 An enormous ghost against his wish appears
 and at his side Ali sees his black plane-tree.
 He felt as if he slipped, as if he vanished, he is frightened
 and with his fingers grips a low-hanging branch.
 The tree shook, its dry leaves
 squeaked, swayed, and all around him spread.
 The wind was stirring the boughs
 and their shadows were formicating Ali's limbs.
 His dazzled eyes discern them and imagine that they are
 winged snakes, which around him are dancing.
 He dashes off, he diffuses like smoke,
 and from the branch Ali Pasha held they all
 never ever any leaf sprouted, naked, scorched,
 barren remained forever as if banished it was.
 He reaches his bed and stretches out,
 sleepless all night, he tosses and turns.

Alone remained the murderers and at Tahir they look.
 They smile knowingly at the Vizier's words,
 as if afraid, like him, of a lone woman,
 and wait for Tahir to make his move.

In the corner, Frossini, still kneeling, breathless
 does not groan, does not shed a tear.
 With hands crossed and eyes pointing high
 she is not afraid to look at her Lady.

Since the time she heard of her cruel sentence
 a heavenly serenity engulfs her face.
 To this world she no longer belongs, as if her body vanished
 and nothing but beauty and soul remain of Frossini.

Σταματᾷ στὸ μέτωπό της ἡ φωτι' ἀπὸ ταῖς λαμπάδες
σὰν μαρτύριον στεφάνι, ποῦ τῆς δίδουν οἱ φονειάδες.
Ἀναδεύονται τὰ χεῖλη, ῥοδὰρὰ σὰν τὴν αὐγή,
μοσχολίβανο μυρίζει, μυστικά παρακαλεῖ.

«Ἄν τὰ τόσα καταφρόνια, ἂν τὰ τόσα δάκρυά μου
δὲν ἐπλύναν τὴν ψυχὴ μου καὶ τὸ κρίμα, Δέσποινά μου,
δός μου κι' ἄλλα, δός μου κι' ἄλλα, νάλθω ἡ μαύρη καθαρή,
ὅπως ἤμουνα, Κυρά μου, στῆς μητρός μου τὸ βυζί».

Ἐπαράδωκε τὰ χέρια μοναχὴ τῆς ἡ Φροσύνη
δροσερά σὰν τὸ νεράκι, ἄσπρα, κάτασπρα σὰν κρίνοι.
Ὁ Ταχὴρ ὄρμα, τάρπάζει καὶ τῆς τάδεσε σταυρό,
τὸ σχοινὶ τραβᾷ μὲ λύσσα, βλασφημῶντας τὸ Χριστό.

Τῆς τὰ σφίγγει, τῆς τὰ σφίγγει κι' ὁ ληστής τῆς δὲ χορταίνει,
αἷμα ἰδρωσε τὸ δέρμα κι' ὁ φονεὶας τῆς ἀνασαίνει.
«Τὰ παράσφιζες, Ταχήρη... δὲ σοῦ φεύγω, μὲ πονεῖ.
Κύτταξε, βαθειὰ στὴ σάρκα πῶς ἐμβήκε τὸ σχοινί».

Οὐτ' ἀπόκριση δὲν δίνει, τήνε σπρώχνει, τήνε σύρει.
Ἐθυμήθηκε τὰ λόγια, βλέπει ἐμπρὸς του τὸ Βιζύρη.
Ἐπεράσανε τὴ θύρα, βγαίνουν ἐξω στὴν αὐλή
ἡ Φροσύνη τί γυρεύει; μὲ τὸ μάτι τί ζητεῖ;

Ἡ γλυκεῖά της παραμάνει σὲ μιὰν ἄκρη καθισμένη
κλαίει ἡ δύστυχη, στενάζει. Πόσαις ὥραις ποῦ προσμένει!
«Δός μου, μάνα, τὴν εὐχὴ σου, μὲ φωνὴν ἀγγελικὴ
τῆς ἐφώνησε ἡ Φροσύνη, θὰ ἰδωθοῦμε ἐπάνω ἐκεῖ».

The light from the torches rests on her forehead
like a martyr's wreath, bestowed by her slayers.
Rosy as the dawn her lips move,
frankincense her scent, secretly she pleads:

"If all the contempt, if all my tears
my soul and my sin did not cleanse
give me more, my Lady, to arrive clean
as I was at my mother's breast."

Frossini surrendered her hands
cool like water, white, niveous like lilies.
Tahir rushes, her hands snatches and cross-ties them.
Cursing Christ, he pulls the rope with rage.

The sadist tightens the rope, his pleasure insatiable
her skin sweats blood, the murderer rests.
"The straps are too tight, Tahir... I can't escape.
I'm in pain, see how the rope has riven my flesh."

He pushes her, he drags her and gives no reply.
They pass the door and out to the courtyard they go.
What is Frossini seeking? What is she searching with her eyes?

Seated in a corner, her sweet nurse weeps,
the poor thing, and groans, waiting for hours.
"With angelic voice give me, Mother, your blessing,"
cried out Frossini, "in heaven we will meet."

«Ζήσε, μάνα μου, για μένα, ποῦ στὸ μνήμα κατεβαίνω.
Γιὰ τὴ μαύρη σου Φροσύνη παρακάλει τὴν Παρθένο.
Τὰ παιδιὰ μου! Θεέ μου, Θεέ μου, ἐσπλαχνίσου τὰ ὀρφανά.
Δὲν ἐφταίξαν, εἴν' ἀθῶα! Μὲς τοῦ κόσμου τὴν ἔρμιά.

.....
"Αν ἐγὼ ἡ σκληρὴ τάφηκα, Θεέ μου, μὴ τὰ λησμονήσης!
Ὁλομόναχα εἶναι τώρα, μὴ τὰφήσης, μὴ τὰφήσης.
Φύτεψε μὲς σ' τὴν καρδιά τους, σὺ, πατέρα μου γλυκέ,
ἐσπλαχνία, ἐλεημοσύνη γιὰ τὴ μάνα τους, γιὰ μέ.

.....
Μὴ πικραίνεσαι, Χρυσή μου, μὴ δακρύζεις, μὴ στενάζεις.
παρηγόρα με τὴ μαύρη, μὲ τὰ δάκρυα μὲ δειλιάζεις ...
Μάνα μου, μὴ λησμονήσης τὸ μικρό μου τὸ πουλί,
ὀρφανὸ κι αὐτὸ τάφινω, ἔρημο μὲς σ' τὸ κλουβί.

.....
Κάθ' αὐγὴ νὰ μοῦ τὸ βρέχης, τὰ φτερά του νὰ δροσίζης.
Μὲ τῆς λίμνης μου τὸ κύμα κάθ' αὐγὴ νὰ τὸ ποτίζης.
Ποιὸς ἤξεύρει μὴ τὸ μαῦρο μὲς σ' τῆς λίμνης τὸν ἀφρό
καταλάβῃ πῶς τοῦ στέλνω τὸ φιλή μου τὸ στερινό.

.....
Καὶ τὴν ἀνοιξὴ τὸ βράδυ μὲ φεγγάρι, μὲ γαλῆνη
νᾶρχεστε σ' τὸ περιγιάλι καὶ νὰ κλαίτε τὴ Φροσύνη.
Τὰ παιδιὰ μου ... μὴ τὰ φέρης εἶναι, τᾶχαρα μικρά,
θάλλῃ ἡ ὥρα τους νὰ κλάψουν καὶ γιὰ μὲ κάμμιά φορά.»

.....
Ἡ Χρυσὴ ἡ δυστυχισμένη ἀπ' τὴν πίκρα λὲς καὶ σβένεται.
Ὁ Ταχίρης, ποῦχε ἀκούση, ὥς κι' αὐτὸς ψυχοπονιέται
καὶ κυττάζει τὴ Φροσύνη καὶ τὰ χέρια τῆς τὰ λεί
ν' ἀγκαλιάσῃ τὴ Χρυσὴ τῆς, νὰ τῆς δώσῃ ἓνα φιλή.

Live my precious, for me, who to my tomb I descend,
for your poor Frossini to the Virgin pray.
My children! My God, my God, pity the orphans,
blameless, innocent, alone in the desolation of the world.

.....
If I the merciless deserted them, my God do not forget them.
All alone they are now, do not forsake them.
Plant in their heart, beloved Father,
compassion, forgiveness for their mother.

.....
Chrissi, do not grieve, do not cry, do not groan.
Tears cower me, I need to be consoled.
Chrissi, don't forget my little bird,
which I am leaving deserted in its cage.

.....
Sprinkle it every sunrise, freshen its wings.
With my lake's waves imbue it every dawn.
Who knows, from the lake's foam the hapless bird
might feel that I send the final kiss.

.....
And in the spring, in nights with moonlight,
come tranquil to the lakeshore and weep for Frossini.
But my children don't bring, they are, the hapless, too young.
Their time will come to cry for me.

.....
A vertiginous anguish befalls Chrissi.
Tahir, who heard, even his heart aches.
He looks at Frossini and her hands unties
to embrace her Chrissi, to give her a kiss.

Τί φιλή ποῦταν ἐκεῖνοι! Ἐχει μέσα του κρυμμένη
τὴ στιγμή, ποῦ τὸν ἐπάνω μὲ τὸν κάτω κόσμο δένει.
Ἐχει μέσα του τὸ σχῶριο, τὸ τρισάγιο, τὸ λιβάνι,
τὸ λουλοῦδι, ποῦ βλαστάνει
εἰς τὴ χέρσα γῆ τοῦ τάφου! Ἐχει μέσα τὴν ἐλπίδα,
τὸν νεκρὸ τοῦ πεθαμμένου, τὸ κιβώρι, τὴ σαϊίδα,
ποῦ μᾶς κάνει κι ἀναπλέμε μέσα στὸ ἀβαθὸ τὸ μνήμα,
μέσ τοῦ ἀπέραντου τοῦ χρόνου τὸ κατὰμαυρο τὸ κύμα.
Τὸ θυμοῦμαι κ' ἐγὼ ἀκόμα!
"Ὅταν τῶρριξα στὰ μάτια, ὅταν τῶρριξα στὸ στόμα
τοῦ παιδιοῦ μου, τῆς μητέρας... Τὸ θυμοῦμαι, δὲν μ' ἀφίνει
κι' ἀπὸ τώρα τὸ γυρεύω, Χριστιανοί μου, ἐλεημοσύνη.
"Ὅταν ἔλθῃ ἐκεῖνη ἡ ὥρα, σὲ παράμερη μὴν ἀκρη
νὰ μέ χώσετε κ' ἐμένα μ' ἓνα σχῶριο, μ' ἓνα δάκρυ.

Τί φιλή ποῦταν ἐκεῖνοι! Θεέ μου! Θεέ μου, πῶς μποροῦνε
τώρα πλεῖα νὰ χωριστοῦνε!
Ἐθυμῆθηκε ὁ Ταχίρης τὴν σκληρὴ τὴν προσταγὴ του
καὶ φοβεῖται τὴ ζωὴ του.
Ἀπεμάκρυνε τὴ Φρόσω καὶ στὸ στρόμα ξαπλωμένη
μέν' ἡ Χρύσα λιγωμένη.
Ἐκινήσανε οἱ φονεῖδες, συνοδεύουν τὴ Φροσύνη,
δὲν τοῖμα κάνει νὰ κρίνῃ.
Τόσο δρόμο, ποῦ διαβαίνουν, μὰ ψυχὴ δὲν ἀπαιτοῦνε,
ἓνα λόγο δὲν ἀκοῦνε.
Δὲν ταραζεται τὰ γέρι, ἐβουβάθηκε τὸ κύμα,
λὲς ὁ κόσμος εἶναι μνήμα.
Περπατοῦν ἀκόμη ὀλίγο, σὲ μιὰ θύρα σταματοῦνε
καὶ χτυποῦνε καὶ χτυποῦνε.
Σκούζουν, ρνάζονται τὰ κλειθρα καὶ τὰ μάνταλα μουγκρίζουν
σκύλοι γρούζουνε, γανγίζουσιν.
Ἕνας δαίμονας προβαίνει μὲ κλειδιά καὶ μὲ φανάρι
γιὰ νὰ ἰδῇ ποῖον θὰ νὰ πάρῃ.
Δὲν ἐπρόσμενε ἡ Φροσύνη, μπαίνει ἡ μαύρη μοναχὴ τῆς,
τῆνε κλοῦν στὴ φυλακὴ τῆς.
«Ἐπουράνιε πατέρα, στείλ' ἐδῶ μὲ τὴν εὐχὴ σου
λίγον ὕπνο στὸ παιδί σου.
Εἶμαι τόσο ἀποσταμένη!» Ἐξαπλώθηκε στὸ χῶμα,
ποῦ τῆς ἔχουνε γιὰ στρώμα.

What a kiss that was! In it hides
the moment that binds this world with the world below.
In it is forgiveness, the prayer for the dead,
the incense, the flower that sprouts
in the tomb's fallow earth! In it, there is hope,
the dream of the perished, the coffin, the only hope
on which we sail in the bottomless grave
on the boundless time's black wave.
I still remember it!
When fondly my child and mother I kiss,
always to mind I bring
and already as a largess I seek it.
When the time comes in a secluded place
lay me to rest with forgiveness, with a tear.

What a kiss that was! My God! My God how could they
now separate!
His harsh commands Tahir recalls
and is fearful for his life.
He removes Frossini, Chrissi remains languished
laying on the floor.
Off they go the slayers, escorting Frossini,
nobody dares a word to utter.
Far they travel, but a soul they do not meet
a word they do not hear.
The wind is not perturbed, the billow became dumb
as if the world's a grave.
They walk a little more, they stop at a door
and they pound and pound.
The locks squeak and tremble, the bolts roar,
dogs grunt and bark.
A fiend appears with keys and with a lantern
to see whom he is to admit.
Willingly poor Frossini enters
the dungeon where they confine her.
"Heavenly Father, with your blessing grant now
to your child a short sleep.
I am so fatigued!" She laid on the ground,
which they had as her bed.

Κάνει πάλοι τὸ σταυρὸ τῆς, μελετᾷ τὰ πατερμά τῆς,
πέφτουνε τὰ βλέφαρά τῆς,
καὶ γλυκά, γλυκά κοιμάται εἰς τῆς γῆς τὴν ἀγκαλιά,
σὰν πουλάκι στὴ φωλιά.

§

ΑΣΜΑ ΤΡΙΤΟΝ
ΗΜΕΡΑ ΚΡΙΣΕΩΣ

Σηκώνειτ' ὁ Ἀλήπασας βαρὺς ἀπὸ τὸν ὕπνο
καὶ στρώνεται σ' ὀλόχρυσο μεταξωτὸ διβάνι.
Τὰ βλέφαρά του κόκκινα ἀπὸ τὴν κακονύχτια,
μελανιασμένα καὶ θολά, σπαράζουνε καὶ τρέμουν.
Θεέ μου, πῶς ἐγέρασεν ἀπὸ τὰ φῆς τὸ βράδυ!
Ἐκύτταζε τὰ γένια του, λευκότερα τὰ βλέπει
κ' ἐπέρασε τὰ δάχτυλα στὸ κρύο μέτωπό του,
σὰν νᾶθελε μὲ δύναμη νὰ σβύσῃ ταῖς ρυτίδες,
ποῦ ἐχάραξεν ἐπάνω του τὸ φοβερό του κρίμα.
Ἀκίνητοι τριγύρω του, ὀρθοὶ καὶ τρομασμένοι
στέκουν ὁ Γκέκας ὁ Βελῆς μὲ τὸ Γιουσούφ Ἀράπη.
Κρυφά, κρυφά κυττάζονται, ῥωπιῶνται ἀνάμεσό τους,
τί σίγνεφο νὰ πλάκουνε τὰ στήθη τοῦ Βιζύρη.
Σιωπηλὸς παράμερα, ἀχνός, συλλογισμένος,
μὲ τὸ κεφάλι του γυρτό, ἔστεκε κι' ὁ Ταχίρης.
Ὅλοι γνωρίζουν τὸν Ἀλῆ, κανεὶς δὲν ἀνασαίνει.
Βουβὰ τὰ παλληκάρια του ἐπαίζανε τὰ μάτια
στ' ὄρματα τάξετίμωτα, ποῦ κρέμονται τριγύρω.
Ἐκεῖ σπαθιά τῆς Δαμασκού, ἐκεῖ χρυσὰ πιστόλια
καὶ καρνοφύλλα ξακουστά καὶ χίλια γαταγάνια.
Τί κρίμα, ποῦταν ἀνεργὰ καὶ τὰ φυσοῦσε ὁ τοῖχος!
Ἀστράφτει ἀκόμη φλογερὸ ἀνάμεσ' ἀπὸ τᾶλλα
τοῦ Χρήστου τὸ περήφανο, τὸ φοβερὸ μυλλιόνι,
τοῦ Μπουκουβάλα τὸ σπαθί, ποῦ ἀκόμη λαχταρίζει,
τὸ καρνοφύλλι τοῦ Σπαθᾶ, τοῦ Ζίδρου τὸ χαντζάρι,
τοῦ Ζίδρου τᾶγιο λείψανο, ποῦ δίπλα μὲς' στὴ θῆκη
κοιμάται κι ὀνειρεύεται κρυφὰ τὴν Ἐλασσώνα!

She crosses herself again, whispering "Our Father . . ."
her eyelids droop
and sweetly, sweetly she sleeps in the embrace of the earth
like a little bird in its nest.

§

THIRD SONG
JUDGMENT DAY

Ali Pasha wakes up heavy from sleep
and lies on his gold silk divan.
He had a rough night. His eyes are red
livid and turbid his eyelids squint and tremble.
My God, how I aged since last night!
He gazes at his beard, whiter he sees it
and his cold forehead with his fingers sweeps
as if by force his wrinkles to efface,
which had been etched by his terrible sin.
Motionless around him erect but fearful
stand Velis Gekas with Yousuf the Arab.⁸
Furtively at each other they look and between them wonder
what cloud was crushing Vizier's chest.
Aside, silent as vapor, thoughtful,
with his head bent, Tahir was standing.
They all know Ali, nobody breathes.
Noiseless his men were surveying
the famed arms hanging around.
There swords from Damascus, here golden pistols
and celebrated old muskets and a thousand yataghans.
What a pity that unemployed they are now adorning the wall.
Still ardent among the rest glitter
Christos's proud and fearful milioni,⁹
the still-yearning sword of Boukouvalas,
the old musket of Stathas, Zindrous's saber,
his sacred relic, which in its sheath sleeps
furtively dreaming of Ellassona.

Είκοσι χρόνια θά σταθούν ακόμα κρεμασμένα
 και θά ξυπνήσουν ύστερα, θ' αναστηθούνε πάλαι
 και ποιό θά πάρη σύντροφο τὸ Μάρκο καὶ τὸ Διάκο,
 καὶ ποιό μὲ τὰ Γριβόπουλα καὶ μὲ τὸν Καρατάσο,
 θά στήσῃ τὸ λιμέρι του ψηλά στὸ Μοναστήρι.
 Κι' ὅταν ἀρχίσῃ ὁ σκοτωμός κι' ὁ πόλεμος ἀνάψῃ
 καὶ πιάσῃ πάλαι τάρματα τοῦ Λούρου τὸ ποτάμι
 καὶ ξαφνισθῇ στὸν ὕπνο της ἡ ἔρημ Βαλαώρα,
 τότε καὶ τ' Ἀσπροπόταμο τὸ κύμα του θ' ἀνοίξῃ
 καὶ θά φωνάξῃ στὰ βουνά, στὸ Περγαντί, στὴ Λάμια,
 ν' ἀνθίσουν, νὰ γιορτάσουνε τὴν ὥρα, τὴν ἡμέρα,
 ποὺ ἀνέλπιστα ἐξωπνέεισαν τὰ κόκκαλα τοῦ Βάλτου.
 Φυτό, λουλούδια ὀλόχαρα κοσμούν τὰ παραθύρια,
 καὶ ῥίχνουν χιλιαὶς μυρωδιὰς καὶ χαίρονται στὸν ἥλιο.
 Δυὸ μέραις δὲν τὰ πότισαν, κάνεις δὲν τὰ θυμάται.
 Λίγη δροσοῦλα, πῶπεςε τανάστησε τὰ μαῦρα,
 κ' εὐχαριστοῦν τὸν οὐρανό, ποὺ δὲν τὰ λησμονοῦσε
 κ' ἐφρόντιζε γιὰ τὰχαρα μέσα σ' ἐκεῖον τὸν ἥδη.
 Λαλοῦν φλογέραις γύφτικαῖς, ἀκούονται τραγοῦδια
 καὶ βροντοφῶνα τύμπανα καὶ θόρυβος καὶ γέλια
 καὶ σκλάβοι, ποὺ χορεύουνε καὶ θέλουνε νὰ πνίξουν
 μέσ στὴν ψευδὴ τους τὴ χαρὰ τὸ φόβο, ποὺ τοὺς δέρνει.
 Ἄλλοι στὸ χῶμα σέρνονται, στὴν πέτρα γονατίζουν,
 παρακαλοῦνε τὸ Θεὸ γιὰ τὸν καλὸ ἀφέντη
 καὶ σκούζουνε καὶ ῥυάζονται καὶ δὲ γυρεύουν ἄλλο,
 παρὰ νὰ ῥίξῃ ἐπάνω τους ὅλη του τὴν κατάρρα.
 κι' οὔτε μιὰ τρίχα νὰ βλαφθῇ, νὰ πέσῃ τοῦ Βιζύρη.
 Ἄλλοι φονεϊάδες σέρνουνε, στὴ γῇ ποδοκυλοῦνε
 μὲ βλασφημίας, μὲ χαραῖς λαχταριστὰ κεφάλια
 καὶ παίζουν μετωρίζονται, γελοῦνε, κυνηγιῶνται,
 καὶ ποῖος πετᾷ στὸν ἄλλον ἓνα κομμάτι αἷμα,
 ποῖος δέρνει τοὺς συντρόφους του μὲ σκοτωμένον χέρι,
 καὶ ποῖος βαστοῦσε μιὰ καρδιά γιὰ νὰ πετροβολήσῃ.
 Μικρὰ παιδιὰ, ποὺ ἐμάθαιναν τὴν τέχνη τοῦ πατέρα,
 μὲ τὰ λεπίδια τους κεντοῦν τὰ ψυχὰ τὰ κουφάρια
 καὶ τρέχουν καὶ σκοτώνονται, χτυπιῶντ' ἀνάμεσὸ τους,
 ποὺ κεφαλαῖς περισσότεραις σκληρὰ νὰ πρωταρπάξῃ,
 γιὰ νὰ ταῖς βάλῃ ἐπανωταῖς, νὰ χτίσῃ πυραμίδα.
 Κ' ἐκεῖ ὅπου ταῖς ἔστεινε, ἄλλο παιδί τὸ σπρώχνει,
 τὸ ῥίχνει κατακέφαλα, καὶ τοῦ χαλᾷ τὸν πύργο.
 Διαβαίνει κ' ἕνας γέροντας, τυφλὸς καὶ λιμασμένος,
 κ' ἐλεημοσύνη τοὺς ζητεῖ, τὸ χέρι τοὺς ἀπλώνει.

Twenty more years they will remain hanging
 and then they will awake, they will live again.
 Which will accompany Markos and Diakos,
 and which with Griva's children and Karatassos¹⁰
 will make a haunt high in the Monastery?
 And when the killing begins and the war flares up
 and Lourou's river will take up the arms again
 and startled in her sleep will be the forlorn Valaora,
 then White River its billow will unleash
 and will call the mountains, in Perganti, in Lamia,
 to blossom, to celebrate the hour and the day
 when the bones at Valtos unexpectedly came to life.
 Plants, flowers full of joy adorn the windows,
 a thousand scents effuse and the sun enjoy.
 Thirsty for two days, nobody remembers them,
 a little morning dew resuscitated them
 they thank heaven that did not forget
 and attended to them in this hell.
 Gypsy fifes sing, lays are heard
 and thunderous drums and tumult and laughter
 and dancing slaves who in their false joy
 desire to smother the fear which scourges them.
 Others fall on the earth and prostrate on the stones
 to God they plead for their good master
 and scream and pound their chests and nothing else demand
 but on them all His wrath to hurl,
 of Vizier not one hair to be harmed, not one hair to fall.
 Other thugs with joy and curses
 anxious heads trample under their feet
 and play, dangle, laugh, chase each other,
 one to another throwing a piece of blood
 slapping one another with a slain hand
 stoning each other with extirpated hearts.
 Small children, who their father's trade were learning,
 with their blades pierce the soulless bodies
 and run and go wild and between them fight
 who will grab more heads first
 to array them in layers, a pyramid to build.
 A child was assembling one when another pushes him
 and falling, destroys his tower with his head.
 An old man passes by, sightless and famished,
 for alms he begs, his hand extends.

Κ' ἐκεῖνα μὲς στὰ δάχτυλα, ποὺ τρέμουν ἀπὸ κρύο,
τοῦ ρίχνουν ἓνα κάρβουνο, κ' ἓνα κομμάτι πτώμα,
καὶ τότε διώχνουν σκούζοντας· «Ψῆσέ το νὰ χορτάσης».
Γιάννινα, μαύρα Γιάννινα, πῶς σὰς βαστάει ὁ κόσμος!
Τέτοιαις χαραῖς ἀκούονται καὶ τέτοια παιηγύρια
μὲς στὸ παλάτι τοῦ Ἀλῆ, μὲς στὴ σπηλιὰ τοῦ λύκου.
Τὸν ἐξυπνοῦσαν τὴν αὐγὴ, τὴ νύχτα τὸν κοιμίζουν
σήμερα δὲν ἐπρόσεχεν, εἶχεν ἄλλου τὸ νοῦ του.

Ἀλῆς

Γιουσούφ Ἀράπη καὶ Βελή, συρέτε, δὲ σὰς θέλω·
ἀς μείνῃ μόνος ὁ Ταχέρ, οἱ ἄλλοι τραβηχθῆτε ...
Ὅχι, σταθῆτε μιὰ στιγμή, μὴ φύγετε, σταθῆτε.
Μοῦπανε πῶς ἐπιάσατε μὲ προδοσίᾳ στὸν ὕπνο
τὸ γέρο Δράκο στὰ βουνὰ μὲ δυὸ του παλληκάρια·
Συρέτε νὰ τὸν φέρετε, θέλω νὰ ἰδῶ ποῖός εἶναι.

Φεύγ' ὁ Γιουσούφ κ' ἐγύρισε σὲ λίγο μὲ τὸν κλέφτη.

Ἦταν ὁ Δράκος γέροντας, ὀρθὸς σὰν κυπαρίσι.
Τὰ χρόνια δὲν ἐλύγισαν τὸ φοβερό του αὐχένα.
Ὡς τὰ νεφρά τοῦ σέρνεται ἡ κάτασπρὴ τοῦ χήτη
καὶ τὰ γυμνά τὰ στήθη του μαυρίζουν λογωμένα.
Εἶναι τὰ μάτια του ἀητοί, τὸ μέτωπό του βράχος,
καὶ μὲς στὸ βράχο ἐβρίζωναν σὰν δυὸ κισσοὶ τὰ φρύδια.
Περήφανο τὸ μέτωπο, ψηλὸ καὶ χιονισμένο,
γυρεύει ἀκόμη πόλεμο σὰν τὸ βουνὸ τῆς Κιάφας.
Τὸ πάτωμα τοῦ παλατιοῦ τὰ πόδια του κλονίζουν
καὶ τάρματα, ποὺ κρέμοντο τριγύρω καρφωμένα,
ἐγνώρισαν τὸ πάτημα τοῦ φοβεροῦ τοῦ κλέφτη
κ' ἐξύπνησαν κι' ἐβρόντησαν, γιὰ νὰ τὸν χαιρετίσουν.
Ὁ τοῖχος ἀντεβούησε, κι ὁ Δράκος στὴ φωνὴ τους
γιὰ πρώτη κ' ὕστερὰ φορὰ ἐνοιωσε λίγο δάκρυ,
ποὺ ἐθάμβωσε τὰ μάτια του. Εὐλογημένο δάκρυ!

Into his fingers, trembling from the cold,
a charcoal they place and a piece of corpse
and off they chase him shouting "Roast it and fill yourself."
Yannena, poor Yannena, how can the world restrain you!

Such joyous events and such displays
are daily affairs in the palace of Ali, the wolf's lair.
They awoke him at dawn, at night they lull him
but today he was not lend an ear, elsewhere is his mind.

Ali

Yousuf and Velis, go, I don't need you.
Let Tahir only stay, the rest of you depart ...
No, wait a moment, don't leave, stay.
I hear that in his sleep with treachery you caught
old man Drakos in the mountains with two of his men.
Go get him, I want to see who he is.

Yousuf leaves and soon returns with the guerrilla fighter.

Drakos was old, upright as a cypress.
The years did not bend his awesome shoulders
his snow-white mane reaches his waist
and his naked breasts appear as a dark forest.
Eagles are his eyes, his forehead a rock,
and in that rock like ivy are his eyebrows rooted.
Proud is his forehead, tall and snowy
still for battle he yearns like the mountain of Kiafa.
His feet shake the floor of the palace
and the arms hanging on the walls
the behemoth's trample recognized
and woke up and thundered in order to salute him.
The wall echoed and in their sound Drakos
for the first and final time felt a small tear,
which clouded his eyes. Blessed tear!

Ἀλῆς

Ποιὸς εἶσαι σύ, παλῆγόγερε, καὶ μ' ἀγριοκυττάζεις;

Δράκος

Δράκο μὲ λένε, Ἀλήπασα, καὶ Δράκος θὰ πεθάνω.

Ἀλῆς

Γονάτισε, προσκύνησε, κ' εἶμαι καλλίτερός σου.

Δράκος

Δὲν ἐγονάτισα ποτέ, παρὰ στὸ μετερίζι.
Ἄλλου δὲν ἐπροσκύνησα, παρὰ στὴν ἐκκλησιά μου.

Ἀλῆς

Ἀκόμῃ μ' ἀνδρείεύεσαι! Ἔλα στὸ νοῦ σου, Δράκο,
καὶ λάβε χάρη τῇ ζωῇ. Προσκύνα, παραδώσου.

Δράκος

Ἔχει ἡ καρδιά μου κόκκαλο, Ἀλῆ καὶ δὲ λυγίζει.
Τοῦ κάκου νὰ παιδεύεσαι, κόψε με, κρέμασέ με.

Ἀλῆς

Τί νὰ κόψω; ἐκούφωσες. Ἡ φλέβα σου δὲν ἔχει
γιὰ νὰ μοῦ βάψῃ τὸ σπαθί ἓνα ποτήρι αἷμα.
Προσκύνα τὸ Βιζήρη σου, κ' ἔλα στὴ δούλεψή μου.

Δράκος

Λῦσε τὰ χέρια σου νὰ ἰδῇς Ἀλῆ, ἂν ἦμαι κοῦφιος·
ποτάμι εἶναι τὸ αἷμά μου, κ' ὅπου χυθῇ θὰ πνίξῃ.
Κόψε με, σοῦπα, κόψε με, δὲ θέλω τὸ ψωμί σου·
ἂν ἔχῃς σκύλους ῥίξε το, δός το τοῦ Βελῆ Γκέκα.

Ali

Who are you, dirty old man, leering at me?

Drakos

Drakos is my name, Ali Pasha, and Drakos I will die.

Ali

On your knees, bow, I am superior to you.

Drakos

I never bowed except in the rampart.
Obeisance I make only inside my church.

Ali

Don't be that brave! Come to your senses Drakos
and I will spare your life. On your knees, succumb!

Drakos

My heart has a bone inside, Ali, and it does not bend.
You torment yourself for nothing. Cut me, hang me.

Ali

To cut what? You are hollow. Your vein cannot fill
a cup of blood to tinge a sword.
Pay homage to your Vizier and come to my service.

Drakos

Untie my hand and you will see, Ali, if I am hollow.
A river is my blood and where it flows all drown.
Cut me, I told you, slash me, your bread I don't want,
throw it to the dogs, give it to Velis.

Βελή Γκέκας

Ό Βελή Γκέκας τώφαγε και τώρα τρώει κ' έσένα.

Δράκος

Μ' έξάφνισες στόν ύπνο μου, δέν είσαι παλληκάρι,
μέ τὸ ψωμί τ' Ἀλήπασα ξγινες χήρα μάνα.
Πῶς δὲ θυμάσαι τὴ βραδυά στὰ Πέντε τὰ Πηγάδια,
ποῦ σ' ἔκραξα, σοῦ φώναξα μέσ ἀπὸ τὸ καρτέρι,
νὰ βγῆς νὰ πολεμήσωμεν οἱ δύο μας, Βελή Γκέκα,
καὶ σὺ δέν ἀποκρίθηκες κ' ἐκρύφτηκες στὸ λόγγο;
Ἄν ἤθελα, σ' αἰμάτονα, σ' ἔπινα ζωντανόνε,
καὶ δέν ἐκαταδέχτηκα, γιατίι μέ λένε Δράκο!

Ό Βελή Γκέκας ἄχρησε κι ἄπλωσε στὸ μαχαῖρι.

Ἀλῆς

Εἶσαι Σουλιώτης;... Πάρτέ του χάρισμά σας,
μὴ τὸν χασομερήσετε. Μ' ἔψησε τόσα χρόνια
ἦλθε καιρὸς ταῖς χάrais του νὰ τοῦ πληρώσω τώρα.
Μηνύστε το τοῦ Σαμουήλ, τρισάγιο νὰ τοῦ ρίξῃ,
γιατ' εἶναι ἀξεμολόγητος, κ' ἡ γῆ δέν θά τὸν λυώσει.
Συρέτε, στρώστε τ' ἄλογα, τροχίστε τὰ σπαθιά σας,
κ' ἐβγάτε στὸ Ξερόμερο, φάτε βουνά καὶ λόγγους,
καὶ μὴ γυρίσετε σ' ἐμέ καὶ μὴ φανερωθῆτε,
ἂν πρῶτα δέν μοῦ πιάσετε τοὺς δύο Κατσαντωναίους.

Καὶ μέ τὸ χέρι ἐπρόσταξε νὰ τραβηθοῦν νὰ φύγουν.
Ό Δράκος τὸν ἐκίτταζε καὶ βγαίνει τραγουδώντας.
«Σαράντα χρόνια ἐνήστεψα μέ τῆς Τουρκίας τὸ αἷμα,
καὶ σῆμερα τὸ πάσχα μου τὸ Σοῦλι θά γιορτάσῃ.

Velis Gekas

Velis Gekas has tasted it and now he will devour you.

Drakos

In my sleep you startled me, you are not brave.
With Ali Pasha's bread you've become like a widow mother.
Do you not recall the night at the Five Wells
where I shouted to you, where I called you
from your ambush to come out, the two of us to fight
and you did not reply but in the woods you hid?
I could have killed you, taken you alive
but I did not stoop to that. My name is Drakos!

Seething, Velis went for his knife.

Ali

You are from Souli . . . Take him, my gift to you,
waste no time; he pestered me for years
the time has come now to pay back his favors.
Mandate to Samuel to read him the prayer for the dead
because he is unconfessed and the earth will not wither him.
Go, saddle the horses, your swords whet,
rush to Xeromero, devour mountains and wild forests
and don't return to me, don't show yourselves
unless you first catch the two Katsantonis.

And with his hand commanded them to pull out, to leave.
Drakos, peering at him, walks out singing,
"Forty years I fasted with the blood of Turks
and today Souli will celebrate my Easter.

Φάγε, Βελή, τὴ σάρκα μου, φάγε τὰ γηρατειά μου,
νὰ βάλῃς αἷμα στὴν καρδιά, ψυχὴ μέσ' στὸ κουφάρι,
πρὶν ἐβγῇς στὸ Ξερόμερο καὶ βρῇς τὸν Κατσαντώνη».

Ἐσκύψαν, ἐπροσκύνησαν, ἔφυγαν τρομασμένοι.

Ἀλῆς

Ταχὴρ, Ταχὴρ, ποὺς τῶλπιζε! ... Εἶναι ἕτοιμα τὰ πάντα;

Ταχὴρ

Βιζήρη μου, σ' ἐδούλεψα. Στὴ φυλακὴ δεμέναις
προσμένουνε κ' ἡ δεκαφτά μέ τὴν Κυρά Φροσύνη.

Ἀλῆς

Τὴν ὥρα ποὺ τὴν ἔδεσες δὲν ἔκλαψε, Ταχὴρ;
Δὲν εἶπ' ἓνα παράπονο, δὲν ἄχινσ' ἀπὸ φόβο,
δὲν ἐνθυμῆθ' τὸ Μουχτάρ, καὶ δὲ μ' ἐκαταράσθη;

Ταχὴρ

Ὅχι, Βιζήρη, μῶδωκε μονάχη τῆς τὰ χέρια
καὶ τόσο, τόσο τᾶσφιξα, ποὺ αἱμάτωσαν τὰ νύχια.
Ἐκεῖνη δὲν ἀνάσαινε, πεζὴ μᾶς ἀκολουθοῦσε,
δὲν ἔπεσ' ἀπ' τὰ μάτια τῆς στὴ γῆ οὐτ' ἓνα δάκρυ,
δὲν ἀνοίξε τὸ στόμα τῆς κ' ἐντροπαλὴ σὰ νύφη,
ποὺ ἐμβαίνει μέσ' στὴν ἐκκλησιά, στὴ φυλακὴν ἐμβήκε.
Σὲ λίγο πάλαι ἐπέστρεψα μὲ ταῖς συντρόφισαίς τῆς,
τὴν ἦρα ποὺ ἐκοιμώτουνε στὸ χῶμα σὰν ἀρνάκι.
Ἦ κλάψαις, τὰ φιλήματα, τὰ τόσα μοιρολόγια,
Βιζήρη, τὴν ἐξύπνησαν, ἐπέταξ', ἐσηκώθη,
κ' ἔτρεξε κι ἀγκαλιάστηκε κ' ἐφίλησε στὰ μάτια
ὅλαις ταῖς φιλιάδαίς τῆς χωρὶς κἂν νὰ δακρύσει.
Στὴ δούλεψί σου ἐγέρασα, Βιζήρη, καὶ δὲν εἶδα
ποτέ μου τέτοιαν εὐμορφιά, τέτοια καρδιά ποτέ μου.

Eat Velis, my flesh, eat my old age
blood to pump into your heart, soul in your carcass
before you go to Xeromero to find Katsantonis."

They bowed, kneeled, and frightened they fled.

Ali

Tahir, Tahir, who could have known! ... Is everything ready?

Tahir

I obeyed, Vizier. Tied up in jail
await all sixteen and Kyra Frossini.

Ali

The minute you trussed her, did she cry Tahir?
Did she utter a complaint? Did she fade from terror?
Did she remember Mouchtar? Did she curse me?

Tahir

No Vizier, she just gave me her hands
I squeezed them so that blood stained the fingernails.
She hardly breathed, she followed us on foot,
from her eyes not a tear dropped to the ground,
her mouth did not open, and bashful as a bride
that enters the chapel, she entered the jail.
Soon I returned again with her companions
and found her on the ground sleeping like a lamb.
The tears, the kisses, all the lamentations,
Vizier, woke her up and alerted
she ran and embraced and on the eyes kissed
all her friends without shedding even a tear.
I've grown old in your service, Vizier, but I never saw
such beauty, such heart, never.

Λοιπόν, Ταχίρ, θά νά πιαγῇ, θά καταβῇ στοῦ μνήμα
χωρίς, χωρίς νά λυπηθῇ, χωρίς ν' ἀποζητήσῃ
τὰ κάλλη τῆς καὶ τῇ ζωῇ, ποῖναι γλυκά στὴ νειότη;
Θ' ἀφήσῃς, θά καταδεχθῇς ἐσὺ μ' ἐμὲ ἐνωμένους
νὰ τῆνε πάρη ὁ θάνατος μὲ γέλοια, μὲ παιγνίδια
καὶ δίχως ψυχολάγῃ, σὰν νάτανε ἕνας κρίνος,
ποῦ τὸν δροσίζει τὸ νερό χωρίς νὰ τὸν μαράνῃ,
νὰ τῆν δεχθῶν τὰ κύματα τῆς λίμνης μου, Ταχίρ;
Καὶ σὺ θ' ἀφήσῃς τὸν Ἄλῃ νὰ ζήσῃ μαύραις νύχταις,
γιατὶ ἀπὸ τώρα θά μετρά μὲ νύχταις τῇ ζωῇ του,
θυμούμενος τὴν ὕβρι του, τὴν καταφρόνέσι του;
Νὰ μὴ δακρύσῃ μιά φορά! νὰ μὴν ἀναστενάξῃ! ...
Αἰώνιο παράπονο μὲ σέ, Ταχίρ, θά νάχω,
κρυφὸ σκοιυλῆκα τὴν καρδιά θά μοῦ κεντᾷ, θά τρώγῃ
ἀχόρταγο τὸν ὕπνο μου, θά μὲ ξυπνᾷ δαγκώνοντας,
γιὰ νὰ μοῦ λέγῃ: «Ἀλήπασα, σ' ἐνίκησ' ἡ γυναῖκα».
Ταχίρ, Ταχίρ, σπλαχνίσου με, στοχάσου, συλλογίσου
κ' εὔρε' μου τρόπο στὴν ψυχὴ νὰ τῆνε μαρτυρέψῃς.
Ν' ἀκούσω πὼς ἐστéναζε, ν' ἀκούσω μιά κατάρρα
πὼς ἔφυγε ἀπ' τὰ χεῖλη τῆς, ἄλλο καλὸ δὲ θέλω.
Ἀπόψε τὰ μεσάνυχτα σὰν ἔβγῃ τὸ φεγγάρι ...
Θυμῆσου ... τὰ μεσάνυχτα ... μ' ἀρέσει ἐκεῖν' ἡ ὥρα,
ἐκεῖ, ποῖναι βαθύτερη ἡ λίμνη, νὰ ταῖς φέρῃς
καὶ μὴ βιασθῇς ὁλότελα, ἀργὸ τὸ πάτημά σου,
γιὰ νὰ ταῖς βλέπῃ ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ νὰ ταῖς καμαρώνῃ.
Νὰ μὴν φορέσουν σίδερα, νάχουν λυτὰ τὰ χέρια,
ἐλεύθεραι σὰν τὰ πουλιὰ ν' ἀπλώνουν τὰ φτερά των.
Ὁχι, Ταχίρ, μαρτύρια. Δὲ θέλω νὰ ταῖς λείψῃ,
δὲ θέλω ἀπὸ τὸ αἷμά των νὰ στάξῃ μιά ρανίδα.
Σὰν ἦναι πλήρης ἡ ζωὴ ὡς τῇ στερινῇ τὴν ὥρα,
εἶναι πολὺ πικρότερο τοῦ Χάρου τὸ φαρμάκι.
Κι ὅταν στὴ λίμνη φθάσετε, Ταχίρ, μὴ λησμονήσῃς,
νὰ καταβάσῃς ὑστερὲ ἀπ' ὅλαις τῇ Φροσύνῃ.
Καὶ κάθε λίγο νὰ τῆς λές, νὰ τῇ ῥωτᾷς ἂν θέλῃ
νὰ ζήσῃ σὰν Βιζήρισσα καὶ σκλάβο τῆς νὰ μ' ἔχῃ.
Πήγαυε τώρα, μ' ἀκουσε, Ταχίρ, θά νάχῃς χρεια
ὀλίγη ἀνάπαυσι καὶ σὺ νὰ πάρῃς ὡς τὸ βράδυ.
Ἐφές ἐκακοτύχτισες ... θά μείνῃς ὅλη νύχτα
καὶ ἀπόψε πάλιν ἔξυπνος ... Δὲν εἶναι μιά καὶ δύο ...
Εἶναι δεκάξῃ ... δεκαφτά ... μοῦ φαίνεται, Ταχίρ.

So, Tahir, will she drown, will she to her tomb descend
without regrets, without longing
for her charms and life, so sweet in youth?
Will you allow, condescend
the waves of my lake to receive her, Tahir?
Death to take her playfully, with laughter,
without death agony, as if she were a lily,
which the water refreshes without withering it?
And would you let Ali spend dark nights,
because from now on he will count his life in nights
recalling this insult, this contempt?
Not once to sob! not once to groan! ...
An eternal grievance with you, Tahir, I will have,
a surreptitious worm will be piercing my heart,
insatiably eating my sleep, awakening me with bites
to remind me "Ali Pasha, the woman beat you."
Tahir, Tahir, commiserate with me, reflect, consider,
and a way find to lacerate her soul.
To hear that she moaned, that a curse
from her lips fled, another favor I do not wish.
Tonight at midnight when the moon appears ...
Remember ... midnight ... I like that hour
bring them where the lake is deeper.
And do not altogether hasten, slow let your gait be,
let the sky look upon and take pride in them.
Do not chain them, leave their hands untied,
free as birds to spread their wings.
No torments, Tahir. From their blood
do not let even a drop drip.
When life is full till the final hour,
the more bitter Death's venom will be.
And when you reach the lake, Tahir, do not forget,
immerse Frossini last.
And every so often talk to her, ask her if she would
live beside the Vizier, to have me as her slave.
Go now, you heard me, Tahir,
you need a little rest before the evening.
Yesterday you had a rough night ... And tonight again
you will remain sleepless ... They are not just one or two ...
They are sixteen ... seventeen ... Tahir.

Καὶ πάγει ἐκεῖνος ὁ καιρὸς, ποῦμεθα παλληκάρια! ...
Δὲ βλέπεις, ἐγεράσαμε καὶ μάς καταφρονοῦνε.
Σύρε, Ταχίρ, νὰ κοιμηθῇς ... Τὰ λόγια μου θυμήσου.
Συλλογισμένος ὁ Ἀλῆς, ἔμεινε μοναχὸς του
καὶ ῥίχνει ἀκόμη μιὰ ματιά στὸ δοῦλό του, ποῦ φεύγει.

Ἀκούεται ἕνας θόρυβος, γέλοια, φωναῖς, ἀντάρα
καὶ βλασφημίας τρομεραῖς ... Ἐτέντωσε τ' αὐτιά του ...
Ἀνάμεσα στὴ χλαλὴ ἐγνώρισε τὸν ἦχο,
ποῦ τὰ πελέκια, τὰ σφυριά, ἐκάνανε χτυπώντας
τὰ σιδερένια κόκκαλα τοῦ φοβεροῦ τοῦ κλέφτη.
Κ' ἐχαμογέλασε πικρά. Στὴν ἀγρία τὴ χαρὰ του
ἐν ἄνθος, ποῦ τὸν ἐβλεπε, μαραίνεται ἀπ' τὸ φόβο
καὶ τὴ στερινὴ του μυρωδιὰ χύνει, σκορπάει στ' ἀγέρι
σὰν νὰ θυμιάτιζε κρυφὰ τὸ Δράκο, ποῦ ἐξεψύχα.

Ἀλῆς

Ποὺς εἶν' ἐκεῖνος πῶρχεται; ... Μοῦ φαίνεται ὁ Δεσπότης! ...
Μοῦ φαίνεται ὁ Ἰγνάτιος! ... Τί θέλει; τί γυρεύει;

Περίλυπος καὶ σκυθρωπὸς τῆς Ἄρτας ὁ Δεσπότης,
ἐμπρὸς εἰς τὸν Ἀλήπασα τὸ μέτωπο δὲ γέρνει.
Ἕνα σταυρὸν ὀλόχρυσο στὰ στήθῃ του ἐφοροῦσε,
σταυρὸν, ποῦ τόσα στόματα εἶχαν γλυκὰ φιλήσῃ!
Τὸν ἔσφιξε στὰ χεῖλῃ του κι ὁ Θύμιος ὁ Βλαχάβας
στὰ χέρια τοῦ Ἰγνάτιου σὰν ἔδωκε τὸν ὄρκο.
Καὶ τώρα ἐκεῖνος ὁ σταυρὸς, σὰν εἶδε τὸ Βιζύρη,
ἐθάμβωσε τὴ λάμψῃ του, ἐκρυψε τὴ χαρὰ του,
μήπως τὰ μάτια τοῦ ληστῆ τὸ μυστικὸ του μάθουν.
Ἐγνώριζε ὁ Ἀλήπασας ἀπ' τὰ μικρά του νειῶτα
τί ἀξίζει ὁ Ἰγνάτιος, τὸν ἐφοβήθη πάντα,
κι ὡς τότε δὲν ἐτόλμησε ποτὲ νὰ τὸν ἐγγίση.

Gone are the days when we were valiant.
Can't you see? We are old and despised.
Go, Tahir, go to sleep. ... Remember my words.
Left alone and pensive, Ali
cast one more glance at his departing servant.

Clamor is heard, laughter, screams, uproar
and terrible blasphemies ... Ali stretched his ears ...
Amid the bustle the sound identifies,
which the hatchets, the hammers were making while pounding
the mighty fighter's iron made bones and he bitterly smiled.
In this display of savage joy a flower from terror withers
and its last scent pours, in the wind disperses
like a whisper of incense for the dying Drakos.

Ali

Who is coming? ... It looks as if it is Bishop Ignatios.
What does he want, what is he looking for?

Sorrowful and sullen the bishop of Arta
faces Ali Pasha with his forehead high.
A golden cross adorns his breast,
a cross, which so many lips have sweetly kissed!
Thimios Vlahavas, too, kissed it with passion
when he took his oath before Ignatios.
And now, on seeing the Vizier,
that cross its splendor dims, its blitheness hides
lest the eyes of the prowler its secrets learn.
Ever since his youth, Ali Pasha knew
the power of Ignatios, always feared him
and until now never braved to touch him.

Καί μ' ὅλον τοῦτο ἐγνώριζε πῶς Ὀλύμπος καὶ Πίνδος
καὶ Βάλτος καὶ Ξερόμερο καὶ Ροῦμελι καὶ Σοῦλι
τὸν εἶχανε πατέρα τους. Ἐγνώριζ' ὁ Βιζύρης,
πῶς κάθε του καλόγερος καὶ κάθε του οἰκονόμος
ἔκρυβε μὲς στὸ ῥάσο του μαχαίρι συνωμότη.
Ἐμπρὸς του τώρα στέκεται ὁ ἀσπιδόμος ἐχθρὸς του
καθὼς ἡμέρα κρίσεως, Δευτέρα Παρουσία.

.....
Ἰγνάτιος

Ἀλήπασα, τὸ θρόνου σου, τὴ δόξα σου, τὰ πλούτη
ἐγὼ δὲν ἦλθα σήμερον ἐδῶ νὰ προσκυνήσω.
Εἶσαι μεγάλος, φοβερός, σέ τρέμει ὁ κόσμος ὅλος,
γιατὶ δὲν ἐμετρήσανε νὰ ἰδοῦνε πῶς σέ λίγο
μιὰ φουχτα χόμα θὰ γενῆς καὶ σὺ καθὼς ἐμένα.

Ἀλῆς

Δεσπότη μὲς στὰ Γιάννινα πῶς εἶμεθα θυμῆσου ...
Πές μου, τί θέλεις; τί ζητεῖς; εἴμ' ἀρρωστος ... θὰ πέσω ...

Ἰγνάτιος

Βιζήρη, χάrais δὲ ζητῶ, πᾶρ' ἀπὸ τὸ Θεό μου.
Ἀκόμη δὲν ἐχόρτασες; ὡς πότε τόσον αἷμα;
Τόσαις καρδιαῖς, ποῦ ἐμαύρισε, ἀκόμη δὲν σέ φθάνουν;

Ἀλῆς

Δεσπότη, ἂν δὲν ἐχόρτασα, ξεύρεις γιατί; τὸ ξεύρεις;

Ἰγνάτιος

Τὸ ξεύρω, τὸ κατάλαβα, τὸ αἷμά μου σοῦ λείπει.

Ἀλῆς

Ἐμάντεφες, Ἰγνάτιε ... Τώρα μπορεῖς νὰ κρίνης.

He was well aware that Olympus and Pindos
and Valtos and Xeromero and Roumeli and Souli
as a father had him. He knew
that each of his monks and each of his stewards
the knife of a conspirator under his cassock carried.
And now before him stands, his relentless foe,
as if it is judgment day, as if it is the second coming.

.....
Ignatios

Ali Pasha, I did not come here today
your throne, your glory, your riches to worship.
You are great, you are dreadful, people fear you,
but only because they have not yet deduced
that you, like I, to a handful of earth will soon be reduced.

Ali

Bishop! Remember where we are. This is my Yamena ...
Tell me, what do you wish? What are you looking for?
I am ill ... I am rickety ...

Ignatios

Favors I don't ask, Vizier, except from my God.
Haven't you had enough? So much blood
so many grieving hearts, is it yet not enough?

Ali

Bishop, do you know why I didn't have enough? Do you know?

Ignatios

I know, I understand, you covet my blood, too.

Ali

You guessed, Ignatios ... Now you may deduce.

Κ' ἐχαμογέλασ' ὁ Ἀλῆς καὶ ἐχαίδεψε τὰ γένηια,
καθὼς χαίδευει τὸ θεριὸ τὰ χεῖλη μὲ τῇ γλώσσᾳ
πρὶν τὸ κυνὴγ καταπιῇ, ὅπου κρατεῖ στὰ νύχια.

Ἰγνάτιος

Τὸ αἷμά μου, Ἀλήπασα, τὸ θέλεις; ρόφηξέ το,
ἂν νοιώθῃς πὼς ἡ δίψα σου μ' αὐτὸ θά ν' ἡσυχάσῃ.
Καὶ ποῖος τὴ θέλει τὴ ζωὴ; Μοῦ παίρνεις καθ' ἡμέραν
τὰ πρόβατα, ποῦ μῶδωκεν ὁ Πλάστης νὰ φυλάξω.
Τὸ Σοῦλι ἐμαυροφόρεσε, ἡ Ρούμελη στενάζει,
οἱ λόγγοι κλαῖνε, τὰ βουνά, ἐρήμωσαν ἡ χώρας,
ἔστειλες τὸν Ἀράπη σου καὶ μέσ' στὸν Ἀἰβασίλη,
κ' αἰμάτωσε τὴν ἐκκλησιὰ τὴν Κυριακὴ τοῦ Πάσχα
κ' ἔκοψε μὲ τὴ σπάθη του, ἐχώρισε στὴ μέση
τὰ χεῖλη, ποῦ ἐξευγάρωναν μὲ τὸ Χριστὸς Ἀνέστη.
Ἐχάλασες τὸ Χόρμιοβο, Χριστιανοὺς καὶ Τούρκους,
ὅλους τοὺς ἐκκηγήγησες, δὲν ἄφηκες κανένα.
Τῆς ἀδελφῆς σου ἐσκώτωσες μὲ προδοσιὰ τὸν ἄνδρα,
ἔφαγες τὸν Σεφέρμιπε, τὸ αἷμα τοῦ Σελίμη
τῶχυσες μὲ τὰ χέρια σου, ποῖος ἄλλος τώρα μένει;

Ἀλῆς

Μένεις ἐσύ, Δεσπότη μου, μένουν ἀκόμη κι ἄλλοι,
ὁ Μῆτρος, ὁ Παληόπουλος, οἱ δυὸ Κοιτογιανναῖοι,
ὁ Μαυρομμάτης σου ὁ πιστός, ὁ φίλος σου ὁ Βλαχάβας.
Ὁ Νικοτσάρας ζωντανὸς στὴν Κάριτζα δὲν εἶναι;
Δὲ μοῦ πατεῖ τὰ Γρεβενὰ ἀκόμη ὁ γέρο Ζάκας;
Τὸ Μακρυνόρος δὲν κρατεῖ, Δεσπότη, ὁ Γιωργοθόμος;
ὁ Σαμουήλ, ὁ Μπότζαρης, ὁ Λάμπρος ὁ Τζαβέλλας,
ὁ Γιώργος ἀπ' τὴ Λάμαρη, ὁ Δήμος, ὁ Στουρνάρης,
παιδιὰ τῆς ἀγιωσύνης σου, δὲ ζοῦν καὶ βασιλεύουν;

Ἰγνάτιος

Ἀκόμη δὲν τοὺς ἔπιασες. Βιζύρη, μὴ φοβέισαι.
Ἄν περπατήσουν τ' Ἀγραφα, ὁ Πίνδος ἂν πετάξῃ,
τότε θ' ἀφήσουνε κι αὐτοὶ τὰ ἔρμα τὰ βουνά τους.
Ἀλήπασα, δὲ φεύγουνε, τὸ λόγο μου σοῦ δίδω.

Ali smirked and his beard fondled
like a beast its lips caresses with the tongue
before swallowing its prey held in its claws.

Ignatios

My Blood, Ali Pasha you want? Drink it
if you feel your thirst it will quench.
Who wants such a life? Every day you snatch
my flock, which the Creator bestowed upon me to guard.
Souli is dressed in black, Roumeli bewails, the woods cry,
and so do the mountains, the lands are devastated.
You sent your goon even to St. Basil's;
with blood the church he stained the Sunday of Easter
and with his blade he split the lips
that joined in the "Christ Has Risen."
You ruined Hormovo, you spared no one.
Christians and Turks, you hunted them all down.
Your sister's husband with guile you killed,
you wasted Seferbey, your hands spilled
Selimi's blood, who else is left?

Ali

You, my Bishop, and a few more.
Mitros, Paliopoulos, the two Kondoyannis,
your faithful Mavromatis, your friend Vlahavas.
Isn't Nikotsaros still alive in Karitza?
Isn't the old man Zakas still walking in Grevena?
Doesn't Giorgothomos hold Makrynoros?
Samuel, Botsaris, Lambros Tzavelas,
George from Lamari, Demos, Stourmaris,
all children of your holiness, don't they live and reign?

Ignatios

You haven't caught them yet, but don't worry, Vizier.
If Agrafa walks and if Mount Pindos flies,
then their deserted mountains they, too, will abandon.
Ali Pasha, they won't flee, I give you my word.

Καθὼς ριζόν' ἡ ἀγριλὴ καὶ σφίγγεται στὸ βράχο,
ἀγκαλιασμένη πάντοτε στὴν πέτρα, ποῦ τὴν ἔχει,
κ' ἐμεῖς, κ' ἐμεῖς, Ἀλήπασα, τὸ μαῦρό μας τὸ χῶμα,
τὴ μάνα μας τὴν Ἥπειρο, βαστοῦμε μὲ τὰ δόντια,
δὲν τὴν ἀφίνομε ὀφρανή. Μὴ σκιάζεσαι, Βιζύρη.
Ἄν ἦν γραμμένο ἐκεῖ ψηλά, ἡ ὥρα μας θὰ νάλθῃ,
καθὼς θὰ νάλθῃ καὶ γιὰ σέ, τὰ λόγια μου θυμίσου.
Ἵπάρχει Κάποιος, ποῦ μπορεῖ κ' ἐσένα νὰ χαλάσῃ.
Τριάντα χρόνους ἀκοπα τὸν βρίζεις, τὸν σταυρώνεις.
Φθάνει, Βιζύρη. Μ' ἔστειλε κ' ἦλθα νὰ ἰδῶ τί κάνεις.
Ἐμβήκα στὸ παλάτι σου κ' ἐσκόνταψα νὰ πέσω
στὰ τόσα, τόσα πτώματα, ποῦ σέρνουντ' ἐκεῖ κάτω.
Ἐμπρὸς εἰς τὸ κατώφλι σου δρασκέλισα, Βιζύρη,
τοῦ γέρον Δράκου τὴν καρδιά, τὰ αἱμάτα, τὰ σπλάχνα.
Τρία παιδάκια ἀνήλικα, ποῦ τάπασες στὸ Σοῦλι,
καὶ ποῖν' ἐλπίδα καὶ χαρά, ποῖος ξεύρει, ποῖας μητέρας,
τάπαντῃσα ποῦ πήγαιναν στὸν Πλάτανο δεμένα.
Ἐτρέξανε τὰ δύστυχα νὰ πάρουν τὴν εὐχή μου
κ' ἡ ἄλυσσας, ποῦ ἐσφίγγανε τ' ἄθρᾶ τους τὰ μέλη,
δὲν τὰφιναν νὰ κινηθοῦν. Μ' ἐρώτησαν νὰ μάθουν
γιατί τὰ μαρτυρεῖς, γιατί τὰχαν δεμένα
καὶ ποῦ, καὶ ποῦ τὰ πήγαιναν. Δὲν ἤξευραν τὰ μαῦρα.
Ἐφές μὲς στὰ μεσάνυχτα... ἡ μέρα δὲν σὲ φθάνει!
Ἄρπαξες μὲς στὸν ὕπνο τῆς τῆ δύστυχης Φροσύνης,
τὴν ἔσυρες στὴ φυλακὴ καὶ ἀπόψε θὰ τὴν πνίξης.
Σέ τί, σέ τί νὰ σῶφταιξέ ἕνας Θεὸς τὸ ξεύρει!
Καὶ δὲν ἐχόρτασες μ' αὐτήν, ἔστειλες τὸν Ταχίρη
ὁλόγυρα στὰ Γιάνινα καὶ δεκαφτὰ κρεβάτια
ἐχήμεσαν σὲ μιὰ βραδεῖά, κ' ἐφόρεσαν τὰ μαῦρα.
Ὡς πότε τέτοιος πόλεμος, Βιζύρη, θὰ βαστάξῃ;

Ἄλῃς

Ἄλλο δὲν ἔχεις νὰ μοῦ πῆς, τρισάγιε Δεσπότη;
Βλέπω γνωρίζεις ὅλα μου, ὅλα τὰ μυστικά μου·
γνωρίζεις ποῦθ' ἀπέρασα γιὰ νάλθω νὰ καθίσω
ἐπάνω ἐδῶ στὸ θρόνο μου. Μ' ἐντρόπιασες, Δεσπότη!
Μὰ τὴν ψυχὴ τῆς μάνας μου καὶ μὰ τὰ κόκκαλά της,
ἀν ἦτον ἄλλος ἀπὸ σέ κι ἀνίσως δὲν φοβοῦμαι
νὰ μὲ πνίξῃ τὸ ψωμί, ποῦ ἐφάγαμεν ἀντάμα,
ἕνας Δεσπότης σήμερα θὰ νάλειπε ἀπ' τὸν κόσμο.

As the wild olive tree takes root and binds to the rock,
always embraced with its stone,
so do we, Ali Pasha, with our teeth hold
our burned earth, never to abandon
our mother Ipiros. Don't fret Vizier.
If written it were that our time has come,
as yours would also come, my words remember.
There exists Somebody who can ruin even you.
For thirty years you have insulted and crucified him.
Enough, Vizier. He sent me to see what you are up to.
Your palace I entered and stumbled
on countless corpses being dragged down there.
In front of your threshold, Vizier, I stepped over
old Drako's heart, his blood, his guts.
Three little children you grabbed at Souli,
their mother's joy and hope
I met while manacled were taken to the plane tree.
They ran, the hapless, my blessing to receive
but the squeezing chains wouldn't allow
their innocent limbs to move. They asked me to find out
why the torture, why the chains,
where they were taking them. They didn't know, poor things.
At midnight last, as if the day was not enough,
in her sleep you seized woebegone Frossini
and dragged her to the dungeon, tonight to be drowned.
Only God knows what she did to you!
And as if she were not enough, you sent Tahir
about Yannena, and seventeen beds
are now widowed, dressed in black.
How long will such a war last?

Ali

Don't you have anything else to tell me, holy Bishop?
I see that all my secrets you know.
You know all I went through
to reach this throne. You shamed me, Bishop.
On my mother's soul I swear, and on her bones,
that if it were someone other than you, and if fearful I were not
that the bread we shared together will not choke me,
a bishop will be leaving this world today.

Τάποκρυφά μου τάμαθες, ένα δὲ μοῦπες μόνου,
καὶ τοῦτο τώρα θὰ σοῦ εἰπῶ, γιὰ νὰ τὰ ξεύρης ὅλα.
Θυμάσαι ἐκείνη τὴ βραδεῖά μὲ τὸ πολὺ σκοτάδι,
ποῦ βγήκες ἀπ' τὰ Γιάννινα κρυφά, κρυφὰ μονάχος
κ' ἐπῆρες τὸν ἀνήφορο κ' ἐκρύφτης σ' ἓνα δάσος
πικινό, πικινό, κατὰμαυρο, σὰν τᾶγιο σου τὸ ῥάσο;
Θυμάσ' ἐκείνη τὴ φωτιά, ποῦ σοῦχαν ἀναμμένη
κ' ἐκείνους, ποῦ σ' ἐπρόσμεναν, σὰν ἄλλοι Μεσσία;
Θυμάσαι πῶς, σὰν σ' εἶδαν, ὁλόρθοι ἐσκηωθήκαν,
κ' ἐβρόντησαν, τάρματα καὶ τᾶκουσεν ὁ λόγγος;
Καὶ σὺ, Δεσπότη μου, ἔβαλες τὸ δάχτυλο στὸ στόμα,
τοὺς εἶπες νὰ σιγήσουν, κ' ἐκείνοι ἐβουβήκαν,
κ' ἐφίλησες κ' ἐφόρεσες τᾶγιο σου πετραχήλι
κ' ἓνα σταυρὸ τοὺς ἔδειξες κ' ἀπλώσανε τὰ χέρια,
τοὺ ἀρπαξαν στὰ δάχτυλα κ' ἐσὺ κρυφὰ κι ἀγάγια
χίλιαις φοραῖς ψιθύριζες, Δεσπότη, τὸν ὀνόμα μου,
ὥσάν νὰ μ' ἐμνημόνευες καὶ νᾶόριχες τρισάγιο
στὸ μαῦρο τὸν Ἀλήπασα; Δεσπότη, τὸ θυμάσαι;
Ἐνὰ κλαδάκι ἐσείστηκε καὶ σ' ἔπιασε τρομάρα,
ἦταν ζαρκάδι, πῶφευγε καὶ λύκος τὸ ἐκυνῆγα,
σοῦπαν ἐκείνοι οἱ φίλοι σου, κ' ἐπίστεψες, Δεσπότη,
καὶ πάλε τοὺς εὐλόγησες κ' ἔφυγες ὅπως ἦλθες;
Εἶμαι κακός, Ἰγνάτιε; πές μου το, στὴν ψυχὴ σου.

Ἐφριξεν ὁ καλόγερος στὰ λόγια τοῦ Βιζύρη
κι ἄκουσε μέσα μιὰ φωνὴ στὰ στήθη του νὰ κράζη·
«Ἰγνάτιε! Ἰγνάτιε! δὲν ἦλθ' ἀκόμ' ἡ ὥρα!»
Τὸν ἔβλεπε ὁ Ἀλήπασας κι ἀπ' τὴν πολλὴ χαρὰ του
πετιέται ἀπὸ τὸ θρόνο του καὶ τρέχει στὸ Δεσπότη.

Ἀλλῃς

Μὴν τρέμεις, μὴν ξαφνίζεσαι! Ἄν ἤθελα νὰ πνίξω
τὸ μυστικὸ σου, Ἰγνάτιε, σοῦ φαίνεται ὡς τὰ τώρα
πῶς δὲν θὰ ναῦρισκα κ' ἐγώ, Δεσπότη μου, ἓνα χέρι,
ποῦ νᾶθελε μὲ μιὰ θηλειὰ νὰ σφίξῃ τὸ λαιμὸ σου;

You know my innermost secrets, except for one,
which I will now tell you; then you'll know it all.

Do you remember that darkest of nights
when surreptitiously out of Yannena you walked
and yourself concealed in a forest, dense, thick,
pitch black as your sacred cassock?
Do you recall the fire they had prepared for you,
and those waiting for you, like another Messiah?
Do you remember how, when they saw you, upright they stood
and how their arms thundered and echoed in the woods?
And you, my Bishop, with a move of your finger
told them to be silent and they lost their voice.
Then you kissed and put on your holy stole
and pointed the cross and their hands they spread
to grasp it with their fingers. And you covertly and softly
a thousand times my name whispered, my Bishop,
as if commemorating me, reading the Sanctus
for your poor Ali Pasha. Do you recall, Bishop?
Then, a small branch moved and panic seized you.
A roe it was, running, hunted by a wolf,
your friends told you, and you believed it, Bishop,
and once more you blessed them and then left as you came.
Am I vile, Ignatios? Tell me, on your soul.

In those words the monk was horrified
And inside his breast he heard a voice crying out.
"Ignatios, Ignatios, the time has not yet come!"
Ali Pasha was observing him and overjoyed
leaps from his throne and toward the Bishop strides.

Ali

Don't tremble! Why are you startled?
If I desired to bury your secret
wouldn't I have found, my bishop, a hand
wishing with a noose to squeeze your neck?

Σου φαίνεται ὁ Ἀλήπασας, ποὺ ἐγέρασε μαζί σας
καὶ βλέπει μέσα στὰ μάτια σας τὴ φλόγα, ποὺ σας καίει,
ἀν ἤθελε, δὲν ἔστειλε καὶ σὲ καὶ τόσοις ἄλλους
νὰ εἰπῇτε ἀκόμη τοῦ Θεοῦ τὰ χαιρετίσματά του;
Ἰγνάτιε, δὲν τόκαμα, ὄχι γιατί φοβοῦμαι.
Κοιναῖς ἐλπίδες, ἔχομε, κοινὸ τὸ μεγαλεῖο
κ' εἶναι κοινὸς μας ὁ ἐχθρὸς καὶ κάθεται στὴν Πόλι.
Ποὺς ἄλλος ἔχει δύναμι, ποὺς ἄλλος ἔχει πλοῦτη; ...
Γιὰ σὰς δουλεύει ὁ Ἀλήπασας. Δεσπότη, θάλλῃ ἡ ὥρα
νὰ πλύνῃς μετὰ τὸ βάπτισμα ὅλα τὰ κρίματά μου.
Τώρα, τραβήξου, δὲν μπορῶ, μὰ τὴν ψυχὴ τῆς Χάμκος,
μὰ τὸ σταυρὸ, ποὺ κρέμεται στὰ στήθη σου καὶ λάμπει,
χάρη γιὰ κειαῖς ταῖς δούτυχαις, Δεσπότη, μὴ ζητήσης,
λησιμόνησε ταῖς Δεκαφτὰ μετὰ τὴν Κυρὰ Φροσσίνη.
Νάξευρες πόσα δάκρυα κ' ἐγὼ γι' αὐταῖς θὰ χύσω!
Πῶς μοῦ ῥαγίζει τ' ἡ καρδιά! Μοῦταν κι αὐτὸ γραμμένον!
Ἦλθαν ἐδῶ κ' ἐπέσανε στὰ πόδια μου ἡ γυναῖκες
τοῦ υἱοῦ μου τοῦ Μουχτάρπασα κ' ἐκδικῆσι ἐφωμάξαν.
Ἔνας δερβίσης ἔσκουζε καὶ μοῦπε μετὰ φόβρα
πῶς τὰ παιδιὰ μου ἐχάλασαν τὴν πίστι τοῦ Προφήτη
κι ἀφίνουν τὰ χαρμέια τους καὶ πέρνουν ἐρωμέναις
Χριστιαναῖς στὰ Γιάννινα κ' ἐγὼ δὲν τὰ παιδεύω.
Ἀφίνω ἐσέναιε κριτὴ. Δεσπότη, τί νὰ κάμω;
Ἀπόψε σὺρε νὰ ταῖς βρῇς καὶ παρηγόρησέ τις.
Δεσπότη, ὅς με σχωρέσουνε, μὴ με καταρασθοῦνε.
Ἡ πίκρα τους γιὰ πίκρα μου, Ἰγνάτιε, γνωρίζεις
πόσοι με κατατρέχουνε καὶ με συκοφαντοῦνε ...
Ἡ μοῖρά μου μ' ὠργίσθηκε καὶ πνίγω τὰ παιδιὰ μου,
γιατὶ παιδιὰ μου εἶναι κι αὐταῖς, Δεσπότη, πιστεφὲ το.
Τραβήξου τώρα κι ἄφες με νὰ κλάψω μοναχὸς μου ...

Κι ὁ Σατανὰς ἐδάκρυζε κ' ἐσφόγγιζε τὰ μάτια.
Λόγο δὲν εἶπ' ὁ Ἰγνάτιος καὶ φεύγει τρομασμένος.

Does it appear that I, who with you grew old
and in your eyes see the flame that is burning you,
if I wanted, wouldn't I have sent you and many others
to give God my regards?
Ignatios, I didn't do it, not because I am afraid.
Common hopes we have, common the grandeur
and mutual our enemy who lives in Poli.¹¹
Who else has the power, who has the riches? ...
I labor for you. Bishop, the time will come
with baptism all my sins to cleanse.
Now go, I am drained. On Hamko's soul I swear,
on the cross, which hangs and glows on your chest;
for those poor women, Bishop, do not plead for mercy,
forget the sixteen and Kyra Frossini.
If you only knew how many tears for them I will shed,
how my heart breaks! This, too, was fate!
Mouchtar's wives to my feet came
and threw themselves shouting revenge.
A dervish yelled and told me in fear
that my children spoiled the Prophet's faith
by leaving their harems and taking Christians
as lovers in Yannena, and I do not punish them.
You be the judge. Bishop, what am I to do?
Go tonight, find them, comfort them.
I hope they forgive me. Their grief is my grief,
let them not curse me. Ignatios, do you know
how many are persecuting me and calumniating me? ...
My fate has enraged me and my children I will drown,
because my children they also are, my Bishop, believe me.
Go now and alone let me weep ...

And the Satan wept and wiped his eyes.
Ignatios said nothing and frightened he leaves.

Δεσπότη μου, ἂν μ' ἐπίστεψες, στὴν Πόλι θαύρεθοῦμε,
καὶ πάλ' ἂν δέ μ' ἐπίστεψες, δὲ θὰ χαθῇ γιὰ σένα
λίγο σχοινὶ στὰ Γιάννινα κ' ἓνα κομμάτι ξύλο.

§

ΑΣΜΑ TETAPTON

Η ΑΙΤΑΝΕΙΑ

Ἦλθεν ἡ ὥρα ἡ στερνή, ἦλθεν ἡ ἀγωνία
κ' ἐκίνησ' ὁ Ἰγνάτιος στὴ φυλακὴ νὰ πάγῃ.
Μὲ τί καρδιά θὰ ταῖς ἰδῇ, μὲ τί καρδιά θὰ κλείσῃ
τόσα καὶ τόσα βλέφαρα καὶ πῶς θὰ ν' ὑπομείνῃ
ν' ἀκούσῃ τόσους στεναγμοὺς καὶ τόσ' ἀπελπισία;
Χίλιαις φοραῖς ἐσήκωσε στὸν οὐρανὸ τὸ βλέμμα
κ' ἐπαρακάλεσα θερμὰ τὸν Πλάστη νὰ τοῦ δώσῃ
βοήθεια καὶ δύναμη νὰ ταῖς παρηγορήσῃ.
Σιωπηλὸς ἀκολουθεῖ ὀπίσω του κι' ὁ διάκος
καὶ τοῦ βαστᾷ τὸ θυματὸ καὶ τὰ ἱερὰ τὰ σκεύη.
Μοσχοβολάει ὁ λίβανος καὶ φαίνεται ὁ καπνὸς του
μὲς τὸ σκοτάδι τῆς νυκτὸς σὰν ἄλλος γαλαξίας,
ἀνέβαινε, ἀνέβαινε καὶ λὲς πῶς σημαδεύει
τὸ δρόμο, ποῦ θὰ τρέξουνε τόσαις ψυχαῖς ἀπόψε.
Ἦ μυροδιά του ἐξύπησε τὴ χήρα στὸ κρεβάτι,
τὴ θυγατέρα, πῶρφανὴ τὴν ἀφήκεν ἡ μάνα.
Καὶ τὸν πατέρα, πῶθαψε μονάκριβο παιδί του.
Καὶ στεναγμοὶ καὶ δάκρυα χίλιαις εὐχαῖς καὶ σχόρια
ἀκοῦς νὰ ψιθυρίζονται, κρυφὰ νὰ συνοδεύουν
τὸ θυματὸ, ποῦ ἐσήμαινε τὴν ὥρα τοῦ θανάτου.

«Διάκε μου, σῦρε, χτύπησε, φώναξε νὰ σ' ἀνοίξουν.
Κι ἂν σ' ἐρωτήσουν τί ζητεῖς, πρόφερε τὸ ὄνομά μου».

If you believed me, my Bishop, then in Polis we will meet.
Then again if you didn't, there is always a little rope
a piece of wood in Yannena for you.

§

FOURTH SONG

THE LITANY

The final hour neared, the agony culminated,
Ignatius set out to visit the jail.
With what heart will he see them, with what heart will he close
so many eyelids, and how will he endure
so many moans to hear, so much despair?
A thousand times he raised his eyes to the heavens
and feverishly begged the Creator
to give him strength, to help him console them.
Silent behind him the Deacon follows
holding the censer and the holy vessels.
Fragrant is the incense and in the dark of night
its smoke appears as another galaxy,
rising, rising as if marking the way
that so many souls tonight will journey.
Its scent woke up the widow in her bed,
the daughter whom her mother orphan left,
the father who to rest his dearest child laid.
Sighs and cries, thousands of prayers and forgiveness
you hear being whispered accompanying
the censer that marks the hour of death.

"Deacon, go, knock, ask them to open
and if asked what you want, mention my name."

"Ανοιξε ἡ θύρα διάπλατη κ' ἐχτύπησε μὲ βία
 ζερβιά, δεξιά γιὰ νὰ δεχθῇ, ν' ἀφήσῃ νὰ περάσῃ
 τὸ θεῖο Δισκοπότηρο, τὸ Λυτρωτὴ τοῦ κόσμου.
 Ἄχιος, ἀχνὸς σὰ λείψανο ἐπρόβαλε ὁ Ταχῆρης
 καὶ σιωπηλὸς ἐκίνησε νὰ δείξῃ στὸ Δεσπότη
 ποῦ καρτεροῦν ἡ Δεκαφτά μὲ τὴν Κυρά Φροσύνη.
 Τὸ πάτημά του σταματᾷ, σπρώχνει μ' ὀρμὴ κι ἀνοίγει.
 Σκύφτ' ὁ Δεσπότης καὶ περνᾷ, τὸν ἀκολουθεῖ ὁ διάκος.
 Κ' ἐν ὧ ὁ Ταχῆρ ἐξάπλωσε τὸ χέρι του νὰ κλείσῃ
 τὴ θύρα, ποῦ μισάνοιχτη χάσκει σὰ στόμα λύκου,
 βραχνὰ φωνάζει: «Ἰγνάτιε, λίγος καιρὸς σοῦ μένει»
 Ἡ μαύραις, ὅταν ἀκουσαν τῶνομα τοῦ Δεσπότη,
 ἐπέταξαν τριγύρω του, ἐμπρὸς του γονατίζουν,
 τὰ ράσα τοῦ Ἰγνατίου, τὰ χέρια του, φιλοῦνε,
 γλυκὰ τὸν ὀνομάζουνε, γυρεύουν τὴν εὐχή του.

Ἰγνάτιος

Γιατί, Φροσύνη μου, καὶ σὺ δὲν ἔρχεσαι σιμὰ μου;
 Δὲν εἶμ' ἐγὼ πατέρας σου; Δὲ μὲ γνωρίζεις πλέον;
 Ἔλα παιδί μου, μὴ φοβοῦ, εἶν' ἐσπλαχνὸς ὁ Πλάστης.
 Δὲ βλέπεις; μ' ἔστειλε σ' ἐσέ, ἀνοιξε τὴν ψυχὴ σου
 καὶ ρίξε' ἐδῶ στὰ στήθη μου τὰ πάθη σου, Φροσύνη.

Ἄγγελικὸ μειδίωμα στὰ χεῖλη τοῦ Δεσπότη
 ἀνέτειλε κ' ἐφώτισε τὴ δύστυχη τὴ Φρόσω.
 Ἐσταύρωσε τὰ χέρια της, τὸ μέτωπό της σκύφτει
 καὶ γονατίζει κατὰ γῆς. Πῶς τρέμει! Πῶς σπαράζει!

Φροσύνη

Δεσπότη μου, πνευματικέ, ραγίζει' ἡ καρδιά μου.
 Πῶς θὰ σοῦ εἰπῶ τὸ κρίμά μου καὶ σὺ πῶς θὰ τ' ἀκούσῃς;
 Ἐπίστεψες ἡ Φρόσω σου ν' ἀφήσῃ τὰ παιδιά της,
 νὰ λησμονήσῃ τὸ Θεό, τοῦ γάμου τὸ στεφάνι,
 καὶ νὰ δοθῇ στὴν ἀγκαλιά, Δεσπότη, τοῦ Μουχτάρη;
 "Ἄλλο δὲν ἔχω νὰ σοῦ εἰπῶ... Θεέ μου, σχώρεσέ με!

The gate opened wide and left and right
 with force rebounded to receive, to let through
 the holy Chalice, the world's Savior.
 Pale, pallid as a corpse Tahir appeared
 and silent went to show the bishop
 where the sixteen waited with Kyra Frossini.
 His tread halts, he pushes with vehemence, the door opens.
 The bishop stoops and enters, the deacon follows.
 And while Tahir stretched his hand to close the door
 that ajar is gaping like the wolf's mouth,
 he hoarsely speaks: "Ignatios, there isn't much time!"
 Hearing the bishop's name
 the hapless women flew, kneeling before him,
 his frock and hand they kiss
 sweetly his name they call, asking for his blessing.

Ignatios

My Frossini, why don't you also come close to me?
 Am I not your Father? Don't you recognize me anymore?
 Come, my child, don't be afraid, God is merciful.
 Don't you see? He sent me to you, open your soul
 and upon my breast your sufferings throw.

An angelic smile dawned on the bishop's lips
 illuminating poor Frossini.
 She crosses her hands, bows her head
 and kneels trembling, shuddering.

Frossini

My Bishop, spiritual Father, my heart is breaking.
 How will I my sin confess and how will you hear it?
 Yes, your Frossini left her children,
 betrayed her God, her bridal wreath,
 and threw herself into Mouchtar's arms.
 What else is there to say. . . . My Lord! forgive me!

Ἰγνάτιος

Εἶναι μεγάλο, φοβερό τὸ κρίμά σου, παιδί μου.
Φροσύνη, πῶς ἠμπόρεσες ὥς τώρα νὰ βαστάξεις
Τέτοιο σκορπιὸ στὰ στήθη σου καὶ τέτοιο μαῦρον "Ἄδη
Ἐγὼ σ' ἀνάθρεψα μικρή, σ' ἐφύλαξα κρυμμένη
σὰν νῆμουνα πατέρας σου, καὶ τώρα ποῦ σὲ βρίσκω!
Ἀρνήθηκες τὸν ἄνδρα σου. Τὰ δύο σου τ' ἀγγελούδια
σέρνονται μὲς στὰ Γιάννινα. Ὁ κόσμος τὰ κυττάζει,
τὰ δείχνει μὲ τὸ δάχτυλο, σκληρὰ τὰ καταριέται.
Καὶ σὺ, καὶ σὺ στὴ μέθη σου καὶ μὲς στὴν ἁμαρτία,
μὲς στὴ χαρά, στὰ πλούτη σου, ποτὲ δὲν τὰ θυμήθης.
Μιὰ νύχτα, ποῦ τὰ τύφλωσεν ἡ πείνα κ' ἡ ὀρφάνεια,
τὰδερνε τάνεμόβροχο, τὸ χιόνι, τὸ χαλάζι,
χωρὶς νὰ ξεύρουν τὰχαρα σοῦ χτύπησαν τὴ θύρα.
Σοῦ φώναξαν, σοῦ γύρεψαν, παιδί μου, ἐλεημοσύνη
ζὲν' ἀπλοχέρι ἄχερο νὰ στρώσουν γιὰ κρεβάτι
κ' ἔνας σου σκλάβος ὥρμησε καὶ τὰδιώξε σὰ σκύλος,
μὴπως ἡ κλάψαις, ἡ φωναὶς τὸν ὕπνο σου ταραῖουν.
Παιδί μου, πῶς δὲν τὰκουσε! Καὶ ποιά μητέρα,
Φροσύνη, δὲν ἐξύπνησε στὸ θρήνο τοῦ παιδιοῦ της;

Φροσύνη

Ἐλέησόν με, Πλάστη μου! Πατέρα μου, ἐσπλαχνία!

Ἰγνάτιος

Καὶ πῶς, καὶ πῶς λησμόνησες ὅτ' ἦσουν Ἑλληνίδα,
κι ἀγάπησες τοῦ Ἀλήπασα, Φροσύνη μου, τὸ τέκνο,
τὰ χέρια, ποῦ ἐμαρτύρεψαν καὶ σφάζουν τὴν Ἑλλάδα,
τὴν Ἥπειρο, τὴ μάνα σου, Φροσύνη, πῶς τ' ἀφήκες
ἐπάνω σου νὰ ἐγγίσουνε καὶ νὰ σὲ φαρμακώσουν;
Χίλιαις φοραῖς σὰ σ' ἔπερνα ἐδῶ στὰ γόνατά μου
καὶ σ' ἔσφιγγα στὰ στήθη μου, Φροσύνη μου, δὲ σοῦπα
πῶς θάλθῃ μέρα καὶ καιρὸς καὶ σὺ νὰ γίνῃς μάνα
καὶ σῶρικ' νὰ θυμηθῇς, νὰ θρέψῃς τὰ παιδιὰ σου
ποτίζοντάς τα καθ' αἰγὴ εὐχαῖς γιὰ τὴν πατρίδα
καὶ μίσος, μίσος ἀσποῦδο, κατάραις καὶ φαρμάκι
γιὰ κείνους, ποῦ τὴν σάρκα της ξεσχίζουν καὶ πατοῦνε.

Ignatios

Immense and terrible your sin, my child.
Frossini, how could you all this time bear
such a scorpion in your breast and such a dark Hades?
I raised you, I protected you,
like your father I was, and where do I find you now?
You betrayed your husband. Your two angels
in Yannena crawl. People look at them,
point at them with fingers, cruelly they curse them.
And you, intoxicated, in sin immersed,
soaked in joy, in your riches, never remembering them.
One night blinded from hunger and privation
battered by wind and rain, snow, and hail,
the poor ones knocked, unknowingly, at your door.
They called you; they asked, my child, for alms,
a generous portion of straw a bed to make.
But a slave, like a dog does, rushed and chased them away
lest the cries and the calls disturb your sleep.
My child, how could you not hear them? Which mother,
Frossini, didn't rouse to her child's wail?

Frossini

Have mercy, my Creator! Take pity on me, Father!

Ignatios

And how could you forget that you were a Greek, Frossini
and fall in love with the child of Ali Pasha,
the hands, which torment and slaughter Greece
and Ipiros, your motherland?
Frossini, how did you let those hands
your body touch and poison you?
A thousand times, as I took you on my lap
and pressed you to my chest, Frossini, didn't I tell you
that the day and time would come for you to be a mother?
And you took an oath,
to remember to raise your children
by showering them every dawn with prayers for our country
and with hatred, relentless hatred, imprecations and venom
for those who trample and tear her flesh apart.

Φροσύνη

Ἐλέησόν με Κύριε! Πατέρα μου, ἐσπλαχνία!

Ἰγνάτιος

Καὶ σύ, καὶ σὺ τοὺς ἔδωκες, παιδί μου, τὴν καρδιά σου,
τοὺς ἔδωκες τὸ αἷμα σου, τὰ μητρικά σου σπλάχνα.
Αἷμα καὶ σπλάχνα ἑλληνικά νὰ τὰ μολύνῃ ὁ Τοῦρκος! ...
Καὶ πῶς δὲν ἐφοβήθηκες μὴ μέσα σου φυτρώσῃ
κάνένα τέρας φοβερό, κάμμιὰ μεγάλη φλόγα
καὶ βγῇ στὸν κόσμον σὰ σπαθὶ καὶ κἀψὲ καὶ θερίσῃ
καὶ ἰδῇς, καὶ ἰδῇς τὴν Ἥπειρον, Φροσύνη, σκοτωμένη
ἀπὸ τὰ χέρια τοῦ παιδιοῦ, πανάθρεψ' ἡ κοιλιά σου;
Μὰς ἐλυπήθηκε ὁ Θεός! Τ' ἀλλόφυλο τὸ αἷμα
φύτρο, καρπὸ δὲν ἔδωκε κ' ἔμεινε πάντα στείρο.
Ἐσώθηκε τὸ γένος μου, ἔμεινε τῆς φυλῆς μου
ἀμίαντη καὶ καθαρὴ ἡ σάρκα καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα.
Φροσύνη, τ' εἶναι πώκαμες; πῶς ἐτυφλώθης τόσο;

Φροσύνη

Ἐλέησόν με, Κύριε! Πατέρα μου, ἐσπλαχνία!

Ἰγνάτιος

Εἶναι μεγάλο, φοβερό τὸ κρῖμα σου, παιδί μου,
καὶ μόνο τὸ μαρτύριο δύναιται νὰ τὸ πλύνῃ.
Φροσύνη μου, τὸ δέχεσαι; μ' ἀγάπη, χωρὶς πίκρα;
Θέλεις νὰ ἰδῇς τὸν οὐρανόν; κύτταξε σὲ προσμένει
μὲ ταῖς ἀγκάλαις ἀνοιχταῖς ἡ μάνα τοῦ Θεοῦ μας.

Φροσύνη

Ἐλέησόν με, Κύριε! Πατέρα μου, τὸ θέλω.

Ἰγνάτιος

Θέλεις νὰ ἰδῇς, Φροσύνη μου, τὴ μαῦρη σου μητέρα,
ποῦ τόσο τὴν ἐπίκρανες, καὶ νὰ τὴν ἀγκαλιάσῃς;

Frossini

Have mercy, Lord! Have pity on me, Father!

Ignatios

And you, my child, gave your heart,
your blood, your motherly womb.
Greek blood and flesh for the Turk to taint! ...
Weren't you fearful that inside you might sprout
some terrible beast, some enormous flame,
and burst into the world like a sword,
to burn and plunder?
And you, Frossini, to gaze at Ipiros, slain
by the hands of the child that your womb nurtured?
God took pity on us! The foreign blood
fruit did not produce, it stayed barren.
Our race was saved, its flesh and spirit
unsullied and spotless remained.
Frossini, what was it you wrought? What blinded you so?

Frossini

Have mercy, Lord! Have pity on me, Father!

Ignatios

Immense and terrible your sin, my child,
only martyrdom is able to cleanse it.
My Frossini, do you accept it? With love, not anger?
Do you wish to see heaven? Look, with open arms
the mother of God awaits you.

Frossini

Have mercy, Lord! Father, I wish it.

Ignatios

Would you wish, my Frossini, to see and embrace
your poor Mother whom you embittered so?

Φροσύνη

Τὸ θέλω, ναί, πατέρα μου, σπλαχνίσου με, τὸ θέλω.

Ιγνάτιος

Θεέ μου πολέλεε, ἐπίβλεψον καὶ ἴδε
τὴν τόσῃν τῆς μετάνοιαν καὶ δέξου τήνε, Πλάστη!
Δέξου κι αὐταῖς ταῖς δύστυχαις καὶ παρηγόρησέ τας!

Τὸ πετραχήλι ἐσήκωσε, ἐπάνω των τὸ ῥίχνει
καὶ ψιθυρίζει τὴν εὐχή γιὰ τοὺς ψυχοφραγοῦντας,
παίρνει τὸ δισκοπότηρο στὰ χέρια του ὁ Δεσπότης,
ὁ Διάκος ἐγονάτισε, τὸ «Μνήσθητί μου» ψάλλει
καὶ λάμπει, λάμπ' ἡ φυλακὴ κι ἀναγαλλιάζει ὁ κόσμος.
Στοῦ δείπνου τὸ μυστήριο προσέρχετ' ἡ Φροσύνη...
«Σχωρέσατέ την, Χριστιανοί». «Ὁ Θεὸς νὰ τὴν χωρέσῃ.»
Ἐμοίρασε ὁ Ἰγνάτιος μὲ τὴν χρυσὴ λαβίδα,
ποῦ ἀστράφτει μὲς στὰ δάχτυλα, τὸ ἀθάρτο τὸ Σῶμα,
τὸ Αἷμα τὸ σωτήριο. Μυρίζει τὸ λιβάνι...
Ἀγιασάνε κ' ἡ δεκαφτὰ μὲ τὴν Κυρά Φροσύνη.

Ιγνάτιος

Παιδιά μου, μὴ δειλιάσετε! Ἐλάτε νὰ σᾶς δώσω
τὸ ὑστερό μου τὸ φιλί. Ἡ ὥρα πλησιάζει.
Εὐτυχισμένοι! Τοῦ Θεοῦ τὸ πρόσωπο θὰ ἰδῇτε!
Παρακαλέστε τὸν γιὰ μέ, εἰπέτε του, Φροσύνη,
νὰ θυμηθῇ, νὰ σπλαχνισθῇ τὴ μαύρη τὴν Ἑλλάδα...

Ἄνοιξε ἡ θύρα κι ὁ Ταχὴρ πάλι βραχνὰ φωνάζει·
«Δεσπότη, ἡ ὥρα ἐπέρασε, εἶναι καιρὸς νὰ φύγῃς!»

Frossini

I wish it, yes my Father, have mercy, I wish it.

Ignatios

Most merciful God, watch and observe
her great repentance and receive her, Lord!
Accept these unfortunate women, too, and console them!

He lifts the stole and places it over them
and whispers a prayer for those about to die.
The chalice in his hands the bishop takes,
kneeling, the deacon chants "Remember me"
and the jail gleams and the world rejoices.
Frossini approaches for the Holy Communion...
"Forgive her, Christians; may God absolve her."
With the golden spoon, which flashes in his fingers
Ignatios shared the Body the imperishable
and the saving Blood. Sweet is the smell of incense...
Sanctified are the sixteen and Kyra Frossini.

Ignatios

My children, don't quail! Come receive
my last kiss. The time is near.
How fortunate you are! God's face you will soon see!
Beg Him for me, tell Him, Frossini
to remember and be merciful to poor Greece...

The door opened and Tahir again shouts hoarsely:
"Bishop, the time has passed, it's time you leave!"

Ἰγνάτιος

Παιδιά μου ... ἀκόμῃ ἓνα φιλή ... φθάνει, παιδιά μου, φθάνει ...
Φροσύνη, τὸ μαρτύριο ἀπόψε θὰ σ' ἀγιάσῃ·
μὴ λυπηθῇτε τῇ ζωῇ, μὴ χύσῃτε ἓνα δάκρυ ...
ἂν ἀγαπᾶτε τὸ Χριστό ... ἂν ἦσαστε Ἑλληνίδες ...

Ἐφύγειν ὁ Ἰγνάτιος· ἔμειναν μόναις ... μόναις.

Στὴ θύρα στέκεται ὁ Ταχὴρ σὰ Χάρος, ποὺ προσμένει,
καὶ κάθε μιὰ μὲ τῶνομα τοὺς προσκαλεῖ νὰ βγοῦνε.
Προβαίνουν δυό, προβαίνουν τρεῖς, προβαίνουν πέντε δέκα,
προβαίνουν κ' ἡ δ ε κ α φ τ ᾶ μὲ τὴν Κυρά Φροσύνη.
Καὶ ταῖς μετρά σὰν πρόβατα, χτυπώντας στὰ κεφάλια
τ' ἀφορεσμένο δάχτυλο, ποὺ ἀναιβοκατεβαίνει.
Ἦσαν σωσταῖς. ... δὲν ἔλειπε κάμμιὰ φυλακωμένη.

Ἀφήκανε τὴ φυλακὴ. Τὰ χεῖλη των ἀνοίγουν
νὰ καταπιοῦνε τὴ δροσιά, ποὺ ἐπάνω των ῥαντίζει
σὰν ἀγιασμόν οὐράνιο τοῦ φίλου των τὸ χέρι.
Ὅλα τὰστέρια λάμπουνε, δείχνουνε τὴ χαρὰ τους,
δὲν ἀνασαινεῖ ὁ ἀνεμος, φοβεῖται νὰ φυσήσῃ,
μὴ σηκωθοῦνε σὶννεφα καὶ σβύσουνε τὰ φῶτα.
Τὰ ζωντανὰ τὰ λείψανα, ἡ μαύρη λιτανεία
ἀκολουθεῖ τὸ δρόμο της πάντα μ' ἀργὸ τὸ βῆμα.
Ἀκόμῃ δὲν ἐφάνηκε στὰ μάτια των ἡ λίμνη! ...
Καὶ περπατοῦν, καὶ περπατοῦν ... καὶ κάθε λίγο ρίχνουν
κρυφὰ κρυφὰ τὰ βλέμματα, νὰ ἰδοῦν μὲς στὸ σκοτάδι
κάνένα πρόσωπο, γλυκό, ν' ἀκούσουν ἓνα σχῶριο.
Ἀνοίγ' ἓνα παράθυρο, δὲ φαίνεται ποιὸς εἶναι·
ἀκουσαν λίγα δάκρυα, ποὺ ἐστάζανε στὸ χῶμα,
καὶ μιὰ φωνούλα μυστικὴ, ποὺ ταῖς σχωρὰ καὶ σβύεται.
Ὁ οὐρανὸς ταῖς ἔβλεπε, ταῖς συνοδεύει πάντα
καὶ κάπου κάπου πέφτουνε στὸ δρόμο τους τὰ ἀστέρια,
λὲς καὶ ταῖς ρίχνουνε φιλά, λὲς καὶ ταῖς χαιρετοῦνε.

Ignatios

My children ... one more kiss ...
Frossini, the martyrdom today will sanctify you,
for your lives don't grieve, don't shed a tear ...
if you love Christ ... if you are Greek ...

Ignatios departed. They remained alone ... alone.

Like Death expecting his victims, Tahir stands at the door
and each one by name he summons to exit.
Two go out, three go out, fifteen go out,
out they go all sixteen and Kyra Frossini.
And he counts them like sheep, tapping rhythmically
his finger hammering down on their heads.
Accurate was the count. No prisoner was missing.

They left the jail. The condemned open their lips
to swallow the dew, which like holy water
the hand of God upon them sprinkles.
The stars all shine, their delight display,
breathless is the wind, to blow is afraid
lest the clouds rise and erase the lights.

The living relics, the black litany
follows its path at a slow pace.
Still not a sight of the lake! ...
And they walk, and walk ... and often cast
furtive glances, in the darkness to discern
perhaps a gentle face, to hear forgiveness.
A window opens, who might be is not clear,
they hear a few tears, dripping on the earth,
a little furtive voice forgives them, fades away.
Witness and constant companion is the sky
and here and there stars are falling
like kisses bestowed, like a farewell.

Ἄκολουθοῦσεν ὑστερῇ ἀπ' ὤλαις ἡ Φροσύνη.
ἀχνή, ἀχνή κι ἀδύνατη ἀπὸ τὴν κακοπάθεια.
Σιμά της ἔστεκε ὁ Ταχὴρ, ὁ μαῦρος ἀγγελὸς της,
καὶ τὴν ῥωτᾷ ἀν' ἀπόστασε, ἀν' θέλῃ νὰ καθίσῃ.

Tachir

Φροσύνη, πῶς δὲ μοῦ μιλεῖς καὶ πῶς δὲ μὲ κυττάζεις;
Τί κρίμα τέτοιο πρόσωπο, τί κρίμα τέτοια κάλλη
νὰ τὰ χαροῦνε τὰ νερά, τὰ κύματα τῆς λίμνης!
Γιατί, Φροσύνη, δὲν ἀκοῦς τὰ λόγια τοῦ Βιζύρη;
Σ' ἀγάπησεν ὁ δυστυχὸς, σῶδωκε τὴν καρδιά του,
τὰ πλούτη του, τὴ δόξα του, σοῦ ἐφίλησε τὰ πόδια,
καὶ σὺ τὸν καταφρόνεις! Πές μου, Φροσύνη, πές μου,
ὤλαις αὐταῖς ποὺ θάλλουνε μαζί μὲ σὲ στὸ μνήμα,
κι' ἀφίνουν ἄνδρα καὶ παιδιὰ, γιατί δὲν ταῖς λυπάσαι;
Μ' ἔναιε λόγο σου γλυκό, μ' ἔνα χαμόγελό σου
θαῖρῃ τὴ μάνα τὸ παιδί, ποῦ νηστικό προσμένει
μέσ' στὴν κοινιὰ τὸ γάλα τοῦ καὶ σκούζει πεινασμένο.
Καὶ σὺ, Φροσύνη μου εὐμορφῇ, ὅσο νὰ φέξῃ ἡ μέρα,
στὸ θρόνο σου θὰ κάθῃσαι καὶ δοῦλό σου θὰ μ' ἔχῃς.
Φροσύνη, πῶς δὲ μοῦ μιλεῖς καὶ πῶς δὲ μὲ κυττάζεις;

Φροσύνη

Ἐλέησόν με Κύριε, καὶ μὴ μὲ παραιτήσῃς!

Tachir

Γιατί, γιατί νᾶσαι σκληρή, νὰ μὴ ψυχοποιήσαι
τόσα κρεβάτια νυφικά, π' ἀπόψε θὰ χηρέψουν!
Κύτταξ' ἐκείνη τὴ μικρὴ μέσ' στὰ λευκὰ ἐνδυμένη,
εἶν' ἡ Ἑλένη σου ἡ πιστὴ, ποῦ τόσο σ' ἀγαποῦσε!
Λυπήσου τὴν, Φροσύνη μου. Τί κρίμα, τὰ μαλλιά της
νὰ μὴ στολίσῃ ὀλόχρυσο τοῦ γάμου τὸ στεφάνι!
Κ' ἐκεῖν' ἡ ἄλλη, πῶρχεται συμ' ἀπὸ τὴν Ἑλένη,
εἶν' ἡ γλυκεῖα ξαδέλφη σου, ἡ συνονόματί σου.
Ὁ Μήτρος τὴν ἀγάπησε, τὴν ἔκλεψ' ἕνα βράδυ
καὶ σὺ τὴν ἔστεφάνωσες, δὲν ἔκλειο' ἕνας χρόνος.

Last of all was following Frossini,
pale, faint and from the hardship weak.
Close to her was standing Tahir, her dark angel,
and if she is tired he asks, if she wants to rest.

Tahir

Frossini, why don't you speak to me, why don't you look at me?
What a pity, what a pity, such a face, such beauty
is given to the water, the waves of the lake to enjoy!
Why, Frossini, don't you listen to the Vizier's words?
In love he fell, the unfortunate, he gave you his heart,
his riches, his glory, your feet he kissed
and you scorned him. Tell me, Frossini, tell me,
all those who to the grave with you will go
and leave behind husbands and children, why don't you pity?
With one dear word, with one smile only,
mothers will unite with children, which starved await
and hungry scream for milk in the cradle.
And you, my gorgeous Frossini, before the day dawns
will be sitting at your throne and I your slave will be.
Frossini, why don't you speak to me, why don't you look at me?

Frossini

Lord, have mercy, don't forsake me!

Tahir

Why be so cruel, why be so ruthless?
So many bridal beds tonight widowed will be.
Look at that girl dressed in white,
it's your faithful Eleni who so much loved you!
Take pity on her, Frossini. Her hair, what regret,
will not adorn her wedding's wreath.
And the other one, close to Eleni,
is your dear cousin, your namesake.
Mitros loved her, one night they eloped
and a year hasn't passed since you witnessed the wedding.

Γιὰ ιδέες τήνε, τὰ χέρια τῆς πῶς τάχει σταυρωμένα,
πῶς περπατεῖ περίλυπη καὶ πῶς κυττάζει πάντα
τὰ στήθη τῆς, Φροσύνη μου, λευκά, λευκά σὰ χιόνι.
Μέσα στὰ σπλάχνα τῆς χτυπά τὸ πρῶτο τὸ παιδί τῆς.
Ὡ! χάρισε τῆς τὴ ζωὴ, Φροσύνη, μ' ἓνα λόγο.
Ἡ μαύρ' εἶν' ἐτοιμόγειννη! Γιατί νὰ μὴν ἀκούσῃ
κ' αὐτὴ τὰ χεῖλη τοῦ παιδιοῦ τῆ βόγα τῆς νὰ σφίξουν;
Φροσύνη, πῶς δὲ μοῦ μιλεῖς καὶ πῶς δὲ με κυττάζεις;

Φροσύνη

Κυρά Παρθένε, βόηθα με, ἔλα, Χριστέ, σιμά μου!

Ταχὴρ

Γιὰ ιδέες, γιὰ ιδέες τὸν οὐρανό, γιὰ κύτταξε τὴ φύσι,
Φροσύνη, πῶς εἶν' εὐμορφῇ, γιατί νὰ τὴν ἀφήσῃς;
Στὸ μνήμα, ποῦ σὲ καρτερεῖ, δὲ λάμπει τὸ φεγγάρι
καὶ δὲ λαλοῦνε τὰ πουλιά, τὰ δένδρα δὲν ἀνθίζουν.
Ἐκεῖ δὲν εἶναι κιτριάς, δὲν εἶναι πικροδάφιναις,
δρυσὶά δὲν πέφτει τὴν αὐγὴ, ποτὲ δὲν ξημερώνει.
Ἵπνος χωρὶς ὄνειρα καὶ κρύο καὶ σκοτάδι
καὶ μαῦρο χῶμα κ' ἔρπετὰ θὰ νάχῃς σιτροφιὰ σου,
χάρου, Φροσύνη, τῇ ζωῇ, τὴν εὐμορφιά σου χάρου!

Φροσύνη

Κυρά Παρθένε, βόηθα με, ἔλα, Χριστέ, σιμά μου!

Ταχὴρ

Χάρου, Φροσύνη, τῇ ζωῇ, χάρου καὶ τὰ παιδιά σου
καὶ μὴ τάφήσῃς ὀρφανὰ στὴ γῇ νὰ παραδέρουν.
Ἐσὺ δὲν τὰ λυπήθηκες κι' ὁ κόσμος θὰ τὰ κλάψῃ;
Θέλεις, Φροσύνη, νὰρχωνται γυμνὰ καὶ πεινασμένα,
μὲ ταῖς φωναῖς νὰ σὲ ξυπνοῦν τὸ βράδυ στ' ἀκρογιάλι;
Θέλεις ν' ἀκούς τὰ κύματα νὰ γρούζουν, νὰ μουνγκρίζουν
καὶ νὰ χτυποῦν τὰ πόδια τους μέ λύσσα, νὰ τὰ δέρνουν,
ὅταν θὰ τρέχουνε κρυφὰ στὸ βράχο λιμασμένα
ἐλημοσύνη νὰ ζητοῦν μιὰν ἔρμη πεταλίδα;

Observe how she keeps her hands crossed
how sorrowful she walks and how constantly she looks
my Frossini, at her breast, white, white as snow.
In her womb her first child's heart beats.
Oh! Give her the gift of life, Frossini, with only one word.
At the point of birth the wretched is. Why shouldn't
she feel her child's lips the nipple to squeeze? . . .
Frossini, why don't you talk to me, why don't you look at me?

Frossini

Virgin Mary, help me, Christ, be with me!

Tahir

See the sky, look at nature, Frossini,
how beautiful it is, why should you leave it?
In the grave the moon does not shine,
the birds do not sing, the trees do not blossom.
Therein are no lemon-trees nor oleanders,
dew does not fall at dawn, the sun never rises,
only sleep without dreams and cold and darkness,
your companions reptiles and black earth.
Enjoy life, Frossini, your beauty enjoy!

Frossini

Virgin Mary, help me, Christ, be with me!

Tahir

Enjoy, Frossini, your life, enjoy your children
don't leave them orphans on this earth to struggle.
Will the world cry for them when you had no pity for them?
Would you want them naked and bereft
with screams to wake you up at night on the lakeshore?
Would you wish the waves to grunt, to roar,
to whip and thrash their feet with rage
when famished they run
stalking a poor limpet in the rocks?

Κ' ἐν ᾧ θὰ πέφτουν λαίμαργα μ' ὄρμη νὰ τὴν ἀρπάξουν
στὰ δάχτυλά τους, ἀχαμνὰ ἀπ' τὴ μεγάλη νήστεια,
θέλεις, Φροσίνη, ἀπὸ μακρὰ ν' ἀκούς ἐκεῖα τὰ μαῦρα
νὰ δέριωνται, νὰ βλασφημοῦν ποῖο νὰ τὴν πρωτοπάρη;
Καὶ νὰ δαγκοῦν τὰ χέρια τους καὶ νὰ σὲ καταριῶνται
καὶ νὰ φωνάζουν δυνατὰ μ' ἀπελπισμένο στόμα·
«Ἀφωρεσμένη μάνα μας, κατὰδικη Φροσίνη,
πῶς δὲ βαστάς τὰ κύματα νὰ μὴ μᾶς πολεμοῦνε,
ναῦρωμε νὰ χορτάσωμε τὴν πείνα, ποῦ μᾶς τρώγει;»
Χάρου, Φροσίνη, τὴ ζωὴ, χάρου καὶ τὰ παιδιὰ σου!

Φροσίνη

Κυρὰ Παρθένη, βόηθα με, λυπήσου με τὴ μαῦρη!

Ταχὴρ

Τὰ βλέφαρά σου σήκωσε καὶ κύτταξε, Φροσίνη.
Γιὰ ἰδὲς ἡ λίμνη ἐφάνηκε. Μὴν εἶσαι ἀποσταμένη;
Ἐδῶ, ποῦ τρέχει τὸ νερό, μὴ θέλεις νὰ καθίσῃς
νὰ πάρῃς λίγη ἀνάπαυσι, τὸ στόμα νὰ δροσίσης;

Φροσίνη

Ὅχι Ταχὴρ, σ' εὐχαριστῶ· εἶναι νερό στὴ λίμνη
κ' ἐτάχτηκα στὴ Δέσποινα μ' αὐτὸ νὰ ξεδιψάσω.

Δαγκᾷ τὰ χεῖλῃ του ὁ Ταχὴρ, τὰ αἱμάτωσε καὶ στάζουν.
Ἐκύτταξε τὸν οὐρανὸ καὶ τρίζοντας τὰ δόντια
τὸν ἄκουσε ποῦ ἐμούγκρισε νὰ φρόσω κ' ἐφοβήθη.

Ταχὴρ

Γιατί, γιατί δὲ μ' ἔκαμες τῆς λίμνης ἓνα κύμα
νὰ ξεθυμᾶν ἐπάνω τῆς τὴ λύσσα, ποῦ μέ τρώγει!

And while gluttonous they dash with their fingers
to grab it, lean from their great fasting,
would you want, Frossini, from afar to hear the destitute
cursing and fighting who would be the first to snatch it?
To bite each other's hands and curse you
and cry aloud with desperate mouths
"Our mother, condemned Frossini,
won't you keep the waves from fighting us
and give us a chance to sate the hunger that ravages us."
Enjoy, Frossini, your life, enjoy your children.

Frossini

Virgin Mary, help me, have pity on me the forlorn!

Tahir

Your eyelids raise and look, Frossini.
The lake is visible. Are you tired?
Here, where water runs cool, don't you like to sit
a little rest to take, your mouth to refresh?

Frossini

No Tahir, thank you; the lake has plenty of water
and with it I vowed to my Mistress to quench my thirst.

Tahir bites his lips, they drip with blood.
He looked at the sky grinding his teeth;
hearing him bellow, Frossini shivered.

Tahir

Why did you not turn me into a wave
the rage, which is eating me, on her to appease!

Νά καταπιῶ τὴ σάρκα τῆς καὶ νά χαθῶ μαζί τῆς
βαθεῖα μέσα στὴν ὄβυσσο, νά μὴ τὸ μάθῃ ὁ κόσμος
πὼς μιὰ γυναῖκα ἀδύνατη καὶ μισοποθαμμένη
ἐνίκησε τὰ δύο θεριά κ' ἐπάτησε τὸν ἄλδη;

Καὶ περπατοῦν, καὶ περπατοῦν πάντα μ' ἄργὸ τὸ βῆμα
καὶ βγαίνουν ἀπ' τὰ Γιάννινα καὶ παίρνουν τὰ χορτάρια.
Κοιμάται ἡ φύσις ἡσυχη, τὰ δένδρα, τὰ λουλούδια
ἐκλείσανε τὰ φύλλα τους, δὲ βλέπουν ποιοὶ περνοῦνε·
τοὺς φαίνεται σὰν ὄνειρο ἡ μαύρη λιτανεία,
ποῦ ἐπέρασε στὸν ἴσκιο τους, χωρὶς νά τὰ ξυπνήσῃ.
Κάνεις δὲν ταῖς ἀπάντησε. Βουβάθηκεν ὁ κόσμος,
οὔτε φλογέρα πιστικοῦ ἀκοῦται στὰ πλάγια,
οὔτε προβάτου βέλασμα, οὔτε πουλιοῦ τραγοῦδι ...
Τί συμφορὰ νά διάβηκεν ἐκεῖθε, τί κατάρρα,
κ' ἐνέκρωσε κ' ἐσκότωσε κ' ἐρήμαξε τὴ φύσι; ...

Παίζει τὸ μάτι τοῦ Ταχὴρ καὶ πίσω ἀπὸ μιὰ φράχτη
βλέπει σὰν ἓνα φάντασμα μέσ' στὰ κλαδιὰ κρυμμένο.
Καθὼς γνωρίζει τὸ λόγο τῆ νύχτα μέσ' στὸ λόγγο
ἀπὸ μακρὰ τὸ πᾶντα, τὴ μυρωδιὰ τοῦ λύκου,
κι' ἀνατριχιάζει, σταματᾷ καὶ σκιάζεται καὶ τρέμει,
ἔτσι γνωρίζει κι ὁ Ταχὴρ τὸν ἴσκιο τοῦ Βιζύρη.

Ἄκίνητος σὰν τὸ θεριό, ποῦ καρτερεῖ κυνήγι,
ἔστεκεν ὁ Ἀλήπασας νά ἰδῇ ποῦ θὰ περάσουν.
Ἐτέντωσε τὰ μάτια του κ' ἐφέξανε τὰγκάθια.
Ἐχεῖ σιμὰ του δύο παιδιὰ φτωχὰ καὶ λαμπασμένα
καὶ τὰ κρατεῖ σφιχτὰ, σφιχτὰ, μὴ τύχῃ καὶ τοῦ φύγουν.
Σὰν εἶδε ποῦ ἐπλησίασαν, σκύφτει κρυφὰ καὶ λέγει.

Her flesh to swallow, with her to disappear
deep in the abyss, the world never to know
that a woman, weak and half-dead,
two beasts defeated and into Hades stepped?

And they walk and walk always with a slow gait
out of Yannena they go and into the grass-fields.
Quietly the world sleeps, the trees, the flowers
their leaves closed, who is passing they don't see.
The dark litany seems like a dream
that under their shadows pass undetected.
Nobody saw them. Dumb the world became.
Neither the shepherd's pipe is heard in the slopes
nor the lamb's bleating or the bird's song ...
Which calamity befell, which curse
mortified, killed and devastated the world?

Tahir's eyes dart and behind the fence
somebody hidden like a ghost spot in the branches.
Just as the horse from afar recognizes
the tread and smell of the invisible wolf
and shivers and stops, trembling in fear,
so recognizes Tahir the shadow of the Vizier.

Motionless as the beast, which his game waylays,
Ali Pasha was standing to see them passing.
He searched with his eyes and the thistles gleamed.
Next to him two abandoned children
tightly he holds lest they escape.
As he saw the litany, he bends and silently begins.

Ἄλλης

Βλέπετ' ἐκείναις, ποῦ περιοῦν μὲς στ' ἄσπρα φορεμέναις,
μὲ τὰ μαλλιά των ξέπλεγα καὶ μ' ἑλαφρὸ τὸ βῆμα;
Εἶναι νεράιδες, πῶς κλεψάν τῇ μάνα σας, παιδιὰ μου,
καὶ τῆνε σέρνουν, τὴν τραβοῦν στὴ λίμνη νὰ τὴν κρύψουν.
Φωνάζατέ της δυνατὰ, μὴ φύγουν καὶ γλυτώσῃ.

Κ' ἐκεῖνα τὰ κακότυχα, ποῦ τὰχε ξεγελάσῃ
καὶ τὰφερε τῇ μάνα τους σκληρὰ νὰ μαρτυρέψουν,
ἐπίστεψαν τὰ λόγια του κ' ἐφώναξαν τὰ μαῦρα·
«Ἀφήστε τὴ μαινοῦλά μας, ποῦ πάτε τὴ Φροσύνη;»
Σπαθί, μαχαίρι φτερωτό, ἐπέταξε ἡ φωνὴ τους
κ' ἐπλήγωσε μὲς στὴν καρδιά τῇ δύστυχῃ τῇ Φρόσω.
Ἐγνώρισε τὰ σπλάχνα της, ἔμεινε παγωμένη.
Ῥίχνει μὴν ὑστερὴ ματιά στὸν οὐρανὸ καὶ πέφτει.
Κυρὰ Παρθένη, δέξου τὴν, ἀπέθανε ἡ Φροσύνη.
Ἀκούει τὸ χτύπο ὁ Ἀλήπασας, πετιέται ἀπὸ τὴ φράχτη
καὶ ἀφίνη ἔρμα τὰ παιδιὰ καὶ μοναχὰ στὸ λόγγο.
Σκοῦζουν ἐκεῖνα, φεύγουν, ποῦ νὰ κρυφτοῦν δὲν ξεύρουν·
Τρέχουν ἐδῶ, τρέχουν ἐκεῖ, τρέχουν ἐπάνω κάτω,
τρυπώνουνε τὰ δύστυχα σὲ μιὰ κουφάλα δένδρου.
Σφιχτὰ, σφιχτὰ ἀγκαλιάζονται, παρακαλοῦν νὰ φέξῃ.

Ἄλλης

Ταχὴρ, Ταχὴρ, πῶς δὲ μιλεῖ, πῶς δὲ χτυπᾷ ἡ καρδιά της;

Ταχὴρ

Οἱ πεθαμμένοι εἶναι βουβοί, δὲν ἔχουν καρδιοχτύπι.

Ἄλλης

Ταχὴρ, δὲν ἀνεστέναξε; δὲν ἔχουσ' ἓνα δάκρυ;

Ali

Do you see them dressed in white
passing with unbraided hair and light gait?
Fairies they are, my children, who snatched your mother
and they drag her, pull her to the lake.
Call out to her, scare the nymphs and save your mother.

And the unfortunate ones, deceived
their mother mercilessly to torture,
his words believed and cried out
"Leave our mother, where are you taking Frossini?"
As a sword, as a winged blade their voices flew
and deep in her heart the hapless Frossini wounded.
Her children she recognized and instantly she froze.
A last glance at the sky she casts and collapses.
"My Virgin, receive her, Frossini is dead."
The thud Ali Pasha hears, he darts from the fence
leaving the children deserted, alone in the wood.
They scream and run to find somewhere to hide.
They dash here, they dash there, up and down they run
in a tree's hollow the poor hide
tightly, tightly they embrace and pray for dawn.

Ali

Tahir, Tahir, why doesn't she speak, why doesn't her heart beat?

Tahir

The dead are mute without a heartbeat.

Ali

Tahir, didn't she moan? Didn't she shed a tear?

Ταχίρ

Βιζύρη, δὲν τὴν ἄκουσα ... ἔχει στεγνά τὰ μάτια.

Ἀλῆς

Ταχίρη, τὴν ἐκέντησες νὰ ἰδῇς ἂν βγάινη αἷμα;

Ταχίρ

Βιζύρη, τὴν ἐκέντησα, δὲν ἔβγαλε ρανίδα.

Τὴν ἔβλεπε ὁ Ἀλήπασας καὶ μαῦρος ἀπὸ πείσμα,
μὲ τὸ ποδάρι του χτυπᾷ τὰ παγωμένα στήθη.
Καὶ τόσο, τόσο τὰ πατεῖ, τόσο βαρεῖα τὰ θλίβει,
π' ἀκούστηκε σὰ βογγητὸ νὰ βγαίνει ἀπ' τὸ πτώμα.
Κρυφὴ χαρὰ τοῦ ἐπλάτυνε τὰ λαίμαργα τὰ χεῖλη
καὶ βλασφημᾷ ὁ ἄθεος καὶ λέγει τοῦ Ταχίρη·

Ἀλῆς

Πάρ' τὴνε τώρα, ρίξε τὴν, νὰ τὴνε φάγῃ ὁ Ἄδης.
Τὴν ἄκουσα ποῦ ἐστέναξεν, ὡς εἶν' καὶ πεθαμμένη.
Ἐκεῖ στὴν ἄκρη καρτερῶ ν' ἀκούσω νὰ χτυπήσῃ
μὲς στὸ νερὸ τὸ σῶμά της. Πάρ' τὴνε ... φύγε ... χάσου.

Ἄφωναίς ἢ κατὰδικαίς μὲ τρόμο, μὲ λαχτάρα,
τὸ φοβερὸ μαρτύριο τηράνε τῆς Φροσύνης.
Εἶδανε τὸν Ἀλήπασα, ποῦ τὴνε παραστέκει,
καὶ δὲν τολμοῦν ἢ δύστυχαις νὰ τρέξουν νὰ τῆς δώσουν
οὔτε τὸ ἑστέρο φιλὶ, τὰ μάτια της νὰ κλείσουν.
Τὴ χαιρετοῦν ἀπὸ μακρὰ καὶ τὴν παρακαλοῦνε
νὰ καρτερέσῃ μὰ στιγμὴ ὅλαις μαζί νὰ φύγουν.
Ἀκολουθεῖ τὸ δρόμο της ἡ νεκρικὴ κηδεῖα.
Ἀκόμῃ λίγο περπατεῖ καὶ βλέπει στ' ἀκρογιάλι,
ποῦ ἐμαύριζεν ἀπὸ μακρὰ ἐν' ἀραμένον ξύλο.
Σιμά των ἔρχεται ὁ Ταχίρ, τὸ πτώμα φορτωμένος,
καὶ μὲ κατάραις ἀσπλαχναίς ταῖς σπρώχνει καὶ ταῖς βιάζει.

Tahir

Vizier, I didn't hear . . . Her eyes are dry.

Ali

Tahir, did you pierce her to see if blood flows?

Tahir

Vizier, I did, not a drop.

Ali Pasha was staring at her and frantic from spite
with his foot her frozen breasts he strikes.
And keeps hitting; so heavily he afflicts them
that a groan was heard coming out of the body.
A stealthy joy broadens his greedy lips
he curses, the infidel, and says to Tahir.

Ali

Take her now, heave her over, Hades to devour her.
Dead though she may be, I heard her sigh.
Over there I will wait to hear
her body splash. Take her . . . leave . . . be gone.

Speechless the condemned, with terror, with fright,
Frossini's terrible torment watch.
They saw Ali Pasha, who next to her is standing,
but dare not, the wretched, to hasten
to give her the last kiss, close her eyes.
From afar they greet and beg her
to wait a moment longer, all of them to go together.
Its path the funeral resumes;
a little longer they walk and at the lakeshore
the dark reflection of a moored boat they see.
Close comes Tahir loaded with the corpse
and with cruel curses pushes them and hurries them.

Φτάνουν στην άκρη του γιαιλού· τρεις τέσσαροι φονεάδες,
που έπρόσμεναν από βραδύς, ταίς παίρνουν, ταίς φορτώνουν.
Έμβηκε μέσα κι ο Ταχέρ και μ' ένα μόνον νεύμα
χτυπούν τὸ κύμα τὰ κουπιά και χάνεται τὸ ξύλο.

Εκύτταζαν ἡ δύστυχαις τὸν κόσμο, που ταίς φεύγει,
και δὲ μπορούν νὰ κρύψουνε τὰ δάκρυά των πλέον.
Θυμῶνται τὸν Ἰγνάτιο, θυμῶνται τὰ κρεβάτια,
τὸ σαστικό, τὸν ἄνδρα των, τὴν εὐμορφιά, τὴ νεότη...
Κλάψατε, μαύραις, κλάψατε, κι ὁ Πλάστης σὰς σχωράει!
Φαίνονται μὲς στὰ σύννεφα ἡ κορυφαίς τοῦ Πίνδου
κάτασπραις σὰν τὰ στήθη των, ἀγναίς σὰν τὴν καρδιά των.
Γέρνουν, θωροῦν τὰ κύματα, λὲς και μετροῦν τὸ βάθος,
που χάσκει, χάσκει ἀχόρταγο σὰν τοῦ Ἀλλή τὸ στόμα.
Πόσαις φοραίς, σὰν ἦτανε μικραίς, μικραίς, παιδούλαις,
στὴ λίμνη ἔταξειδεύσανε μὲ γέλοια, μὲ παιγνίδια!
Πόσαις φοραίς ἀπλώσανε τὰ πόδια των τὰ χέρια
και κυνηγοῦσαν τὰ νερά στὰ δάχτυλα νὰ πιάσουν!
Και τώρα, ἀντὶ τὰ παίζουνε κι' ἀντὶ νὰ τραγουδοῦνε,
τρέμουν νὰ ἰδοῦνε τὸν ἀφρό, που θὰ ταίς σαβανώσει!

Πόσο μακρὰ που ἔφυγαν! Τί γρήγορα που τρέχουν!
Ἄλλο δὲ φαίνεται ὁ γιαιλός. Τὰ μάτια των γυρεύουν
νὰ ἰδοῦν ἀκόμη μιά φορά τὸ μητρικό των χῶμα,
κι' ἐκεῖνο λὲς κι' ἐσβύστηκε μὲς στὰ νερά τῆς λίμνης!

Εκύτταζε ὁ Ἀλήπασας ἀνήσυχος στὸ βράχο
τὸ μαῖο ξυλοκρέββατο, που ἐδιάβαινε μονάχο.
Λὲς και τῆς λίμνης οἱ ἀφροὶ στὸν ὠμό τους τὸ παίρνουν
και σ' ἐκκλησιὰ μακρὰ μακρὰ, σιγὰ σιγὰ τὸ φέρνουν.
Τὸ βλέπει που ἔσταμάτησε... Σηκώνεται, προσμένει,
βουβός, δὲν ἀνασαίνει.

Και στέκει κι ἀκουρμαίνεται και καρτερεῖ ν' ἀκούση...
Κοιμῶντ' ἀκόμη τὰ νερά, νεκρά δὲν ἀντηχοῦσι.
Ὁ πρῶτος χτύπος ἔφθασε... χαμογελά, σπαράζει.
Δεύτερος... τρίτος... τέταρτος... μετρά και ἀναγαλλιάζει.
Τί βιάζεσαι, τί βιάζεσαι; δὲ βλέπεις τὸ Βιζύρη;
που δὲ προφθάνει νὰ μετρά, σκληρὲ παραβοκῆρη;

They reach the edge of the lakeshore. Several killers,
who since evening await, load them on the boat.
Tahir jumps in and on his nod
the oars beat the waves and the boat disappears.

They gaze at the world they leave behind
and their tears cannot hide any longer.
They remember Ignatios, remember their beds,
home, husband, beauty, youth...
Wretched ones, weep, God forgives you.

Among the clouds loom the heights of Pindos
snow-white like their breasts, chaste like their hearts.
The women lean and at the wave, fathoming its depth,
insatiable wave, gaping like Ali's mouth.
How many times, when little girls they were,
they journeyed to the lake with laughter and joy!
Their innocent hands, how many times they extended
and chased the water to catch it in their fingers.
And now rather than playing or singing,
they dread to see the foam that will shroud them.

How far they've gone! How fast they go!
The shore is no longer visible. Their eyes search
to see one more time the earth of their birth,
but it's gone, as if erased by the lake.

On the rock worried, Ali Pasha watched
the black wooden coffin, sailing alone
as if carried slowly, slowly
on the shoulders of the foam to a faraway church.
He sees it stop... He rises, waits,
speechless, breathless.

He stands and hearkens, anxious to hear,
the water's dead, asleep.
And then, there's the first splash... he smiles, he stirs.
Two, three, four, ... he counts in delight.
What's the hurry, cruel boatman, what's the rush?
Don't you see the Vizier cannot keep up with the count?

Δυὸ τρεῖς ἀκόμῃ ἐμέναινε. Ἐλάφρωσε τὸ ξύλο
καὶ κολυμβᾷ σὰ φύλλο.

Δεκάξῃ χτύποι ἀκούονται...δὲν ἔσωσαν ἀκόμα:
Κρυφὰ λογάριζε ὁ Ἀλῆς καὶ τῶλεπε ἕνα πτώμα
σκύφτουνε δυὸ, τάρπάζουνε, τὸ σέρνουν, τὸ τραβοῦνε,
σφιχτὰ τοῦ δένουν μιὰ θηλειά, μιὰ πέτρα τοῦ κρεμνοῦνε.
Ἕνας κρατεῖ τὰ πόδια του, γυμνὰ καὶ ξυλιασμένα,
κι' ἄλλος βαστοῦσε τὰ μαλλιά στὰ δάχτυλα δεμένα.
Ἐπάνω κάτω τὸ κινεῖν, λές καὶ τὸ νανουρίζουν·
φωλιάζουν μιὰ, φωλιάζουν δυὸ καὶ τρεῖς...τὸ σφεινδοῦρίζουν.
Ἐχτύπησαν τὰ κύματα μὲ θόρυβο μεγάλο,
μ' ἀφροὺς πολλοὺς καὶ σάλο.

Κάμνει στεφάνια τὸ νερὸ, ποὺ ἐκτείνονται, πλαταίνουν
καὶ στὰ ποδάρια τοῦ Ἀλῆ νὰ ξεψυχήσουν πγαίνουν.
Λές καὶ τὸ κύμα τῇ νεκρῇ γιὰ νύφη του ἀγκαλιάζει
καὶ μὲ στεφάνια ἀπὸ νερὸ τὸ γάμο του γιορτάζει.
Γέρνει ὁ Ταχέρης γιὰ νὰ ἰδῇ...κι ἀκούει τῇ γαργάρα
καὶ τὸν ἀφρό, ποὺ ἀνέβαινε σὰ μυστικὴ κατάρρα,
ποὺ ὁ κάτω κόσμος τῶστειλε ἀπ' τὰ ψυχρά του βάθη.
Ἐκρίωσε ἀπ' τὸ φόβο του, ἐσβύστηκεν, ἐχάθη.
Φύγε, ληστή, ὁ Ἰσκιος σου τὸ μνήμα μὴ μολύνῃ,
ὅπου κοιμῶντ' ἡ δεκαφτὰ μὲ τὴν Κυρά Φροσύνη.
Ἐσήκωσαν τὸ σίδερο, ἀφρίζουν τὰ κουπιά τους,
Φεύγουν!... Ἀνάθεμά τους!

Καὶ σύ, Ἀλῆ, ποὺ ἐχόρτασες τὴ λύσσα, τὴν ὀργή σου,
σὰν ἔλθῃ ἡ ὥρα ἢ φοβερή, κλεισμένος στὸ νησί σου,
τὴ νύχτα ἐδῶ, ποὺ ἐπέρασες, δὲ θὰ τῇ λησμονήσῃς!
Κι ὅταν θ' ἀπλόησες στὸ νερὸ τὰ χεῖλῃ νὰ δροσίσης
Φωτιά θὰ πίνῃς ἀσβεστη καὶ θέρμῃ καὶ πικράδα.
Εἶν' ἀλμυρά τὰ δάκρυα κι ἀφίνουν φαρμακάδα.
Εἶν' ἀλμυρά, θυμήσου το! Θὰ ἰδῇς πὼς θὰ ξυπνήσουν,
πὼς θάλθουνε στὸ βράχο σου τὴ νύχτα νὰ χτυπήσουν,
σὰν κύματα ὀλοφούσκωτα, ἀφροστεφανωμένα,
μὲ βογγητό, μὲ μούγκρισμα, σκληρὰ καὶ διψασμένα.
Τριγύρω σου θὰ σηκωθοῦν, ψηλὰ βουνὰ θὰ γίνουν,
τὸ δρόμο θὰ σοῦ κλείσουνε, νὰ φύγῃς δὲ θ' ἀφίνουν.
Θὰ νὰ ζητῇς βοήθεια, κανεὶς δὲ θ' ἀγροικαίει...
Η ΑΙΜΝΗ ΘΑ ΣΕ ΦΑΓΕΙ.

Two or three are left. Lighter, the boat
floats like a leaf.

Sixteen splashes... is it not over yet?
Ali kept count, one corpse was missing.
Two men grab it, drag it, lift it
with a tight noose and a stone attached.
One holds the legs, naked and stiff,
the other the hair entangled in his fingers.
They swing it back and forth as if to lull it.
One, two, three, and they sling the body.
It splashes violently into the water
surging, foaming.

The water creates wreaths, which broaden and extend
and to Ali's legs they go to expire
as if the waves are marrying the dead
and with water-wreaths their wedding celebrate.
Tahir leans to see... and hears a gurgle
ascending with the foam like a secret curse,
which the underworld sent from its frigid depths.
He froze in fear, dissolved, vanished.
"Be gone, thief, your shadow taints the tomb
where the sixteen and Kyra Frossini sleep."
They raise the anchor, the oars are foaming.
They are leaving!... Curse be on them!

For now, Ali, you have sated your rage, your wrath.
But when the terrible hour comes, prisoner on your island,
you will never forget the night you spent here!
And when you reach for water to wet your lips
you shall drink burning fire and bitterness.
Tears are salty and leave a sour taste.
They are salty, remember it! They will awake
and come at night to smite your rock
like fully-surged, foam-wreathed waves,
groaning and bellowing, cruel and thirsty.
They shall rise around you, tall as mountains
they will seal off your path, block your escape.
You will ask for help, nobody will hear you...
THE LAKE WILL SWALLOW YOU.

NOTES TO THE TEXT

1. In 1746, Ali's mother, Hamko, attacked Gardiki, but she was captured by Tsaousi Prifti. She never forgot this ordeal, and later, with the help of Athanasios Vagias, she slaughtered the people of Gardiki. Valaoritis claims that even as she was dying she never forgot the revenge.

2. Arvanitia: Albania, and Roumeli and Agrafta, parts of Greece.

3. Souli: A settlement in an area in northwestern Greece that never surrendered to Turkish authority. The Turks tried many times to gain control of the region. After he became pasha of Ioannina in 1788, Ali tried for many years to take Souli. In 1790 his army of three thousand was eliminated. After this, he managed to take some of the Souliot leaders as hostages, but at the next attack, the Souliot women killed seven hundred of Ali's soldiers. Finally, Ali promised to let the Souliots go, if they would give up their fortresses. At Christmas 1803 the majority of the Souliots left. Despite their promises, the Turks attacked them. Those who remained behind fought a last hopeless battle against Ali's soldiers and, refusing to surrender, set fire to the powder magazine and died rather than be captured. Women along with their children jumped from Mount Zalongo, while others chose suicide in the fortress of the village of Riza, again by setting fire to the powder magazine.

4. Lambros Tzavellas: A patriot who fought Ali.

5. Pindos: One of the largest and highest mountains in central Greece.

6. Balkamia: What is now Alexandroupolis in the easternmost part of Greece.

7. Astriti and Akonaki: Poisonous snakes indigenous to Greece.

8. Velis Gekas: An Albanian who under Ali became a relentless pursuer of Greek patriots.

9. Milioni: A front-loading rifle which was rendered obsolete after the appearance in 1841 of the back-loading rifle.

10. Several Greek names of patriots appear in this section.

11. Poli stands for Constantinople.

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NANOS VALAORITIS, the great grandson of Aristotelis Valaoritis, is considered one of the most distinguished writers in Greece today and has been described as the most important poet of the Hellenic Diaspora since Constantine Cavafy. He has published widely as a poet, novelist, and essayist. Raised in a cosmopolitan family, Valaoritis has lived in Greece, England, France, where he participated in the activities of Andre Breton's Surrealist group, and the United States, where he taught most of his academic career. Since his retirement from San Francisco State University, he has been living in Greece.

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