

Αδυναμία

Translated to: “Frailty”

Δημήτρης Αθηνάκης

From:

Karen van Dyck’s

ΜΕΤΡΑ ΛΙΤΟΤΗΤΑΣ

But where are all these dead people going?

Where do the dead go when they die, Dad?

His eyes watch me.

Beautiful eyes.

Sometime I would like to write something about them,
to ask them why they still don't allow me to smoke.

Why do you still not allow me to smoke?

frailty

Today, I wore all my clothes to hide the weight
that I lost,

the hair that I lost,

my belly that was visibly empty.

I have no other shoes.

I put them all into the last package for you, if you remember.

You said you fit in them whole. But how could you fit?

You were always a tall man.

I still remember the shoelaces smiling.

Joyous that they would be meeting you

frailty

I still remember my clothes smiling—

those that I wore to go out.

With many folds and wrinkles, and that curve they make
in my armpit

from the immense frailty.

My dress shirts do not fit me anymore –

so, I wore two-three together.

My shirts and wool sweaters constrict me

at the neck.

But it does not bother me, because I left all of my scarves at the

post office.

I was about to put those too in that package,

but an employee liked them

and I gifted them.

All of my scarves, imagine.

frailty

I did not write anything else after that day.

I only sat alone in that office chair

and I was getting angry that he was not letting me smoke.

I became the smoke.

I was rising to the ceiling and returning back to the chair

and again to the ceiling and again to the chair.

I went out to the balcony for a bit.

The balcony was as small as the house.

On one end the clothes were hanging out to dry.

On the other end there was me.

We were competing to see who was hanging better.

frailty

His eyes.

His eyes are beautiful.

When they wear my favorite shoes,
they become different.

His eyes are words that do not fit in a poem.

My dad's eyes.

frailty

The package was returned to me.

- *Next time do not mock us, sir.*

- *But why? The smiling laces are pretty.*

I want to see your eyes again.

frailty

I walked down to the avenue in the morning.

Corpses stacked in heaps.

They were putting them one by one in a truck. Big
truck, with big wheels.

They were getting ready, it seems, for a big trip.

But where are all these dead people going?

Where do the dead go when they die, Dad?

frailty

I was able to put my dad in a poem.

I was never able to quit smoking,

but every time that I tie my shoelaces

I collapse in front of the mirror

and look at myself for hours.

I ready myself for the new days.

I wear whatever I find and go to the

post office often.

I like stamps —

I always have a good place to rest my tongue.

