

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.

## Άδυναμία

Μὰ ποῦ πᾶνε ὅλοι αὐτοὶ οἱ νεκροί;  
Ποῦ πᾶνε οἱ νεκροὶ ὅταν πεθαίνουν, μπαμπά;

Τὰ μάτια του μὲ κοιτάζουν.

Ὅμορφα μάτια.

Καμιὰ φορὰ θέλω κάτι νὰ γράψω γι' αὐτά,  
νὰ τὰ ρωτήσω γιατί δὲν μ' ἀφήνει ἀκόμα νὰ καπνίσω.

Γιατί δὲν μ' ἀφήνεις ἀκόμα νὰ καπνίσω;

### ἄδυναμία

Φόρεσα σήμερα ὅλα μου τὰ ροῦχα νὰ μὴ φαίνονται τὰ κιλά  
ποῦ ἔχασα,

οἱ τρίχες ποῦ ἔχασα,

ἢ κοιλιὰ μου ποῦ ἔδειχνε ἀφιλόξενη.

Παπούτσια δὲν ἔχω ἄλλα.

Σ'τά'βαλα, ἂν θυμᾶσαι, ὅλα στὸ τελευταῖο δέμα.

Χωροῦσες, εἶπες, μὲς σ' αὐτά, ὀλόκληρος. Μὰ πῶς χωροῦσες;

Ἐσὺ ἦσουν πάντοτε ψηλός.

Θυμᾶμαι ἀκόμα τὰ χαμόγελα ποῦ σχημάτιζαν τὰ κορδόνια.

Ἄπ' τὴν πολλὴ χαρὰ ποῦ θὰ σὲ συναντοῦσαν.

### ἄδυναμία

Θυμᾶμαι ἀκόμα τὰ χαμόγελα ποῦ σχημάτιζαν τὰ ροῦχα μου -  
αὐτὰ ποῦ ἔβαλα γιὰ νὰ βγῶ ἔξω.

Πτυχές καὶ τσαλακώματα πολλά, κι ἐκείνη ἢ καμπύλη ποῦ  
κάνουν

στὴ μασχάλη μου

ἄπ' τὴν πολλὴ ἄδυναμία.

Τὰ πουκάμισα δὲν μοῦ κάνουν πιά –  
 γι' αὐτὸ φόρεσα δύο-τρία μαζί.  
 Οἱ μπλοῦζες καὶ τὰ μάλλινα πουλόβερ μὲ σφίγγουν  
 στὸν λαιμὸ  
 ἀλλὰ δὲν μὲ νοιάζει, γιατί ἄφησα ἕλα μου τὰ κασκώλ στὸ  
 ταχυδρομεῖο.

*Ἦταν νὰ τὰ βάλω κι αὐτὰ σὲ κείνο τὸ δέμα,  
 ἀλλ' ἄρεσαν σ' ἕναν ὑπάλληλο  
 καὶ τοῦ τὰ χάρισα.  
 Ὅλα μου τὰ κασκώλ, γιὰ φαντάσου.*

### ἄδυναμία

Δὲν ἔγραψα τίποτε ἄλλο ὕστερα ἀπὸ κείνη τὴν ἡμέρα.  
 Μόνο κάθισα μόνος σὲ κείνη τὴν καρέκλα τοῦ γραφείου  
 καὶ θύμωνα ποὺ δὲν μ' ἄφηνε νὰ καπνίζω.  
 Καπνὸς ἔγινα ἐγώ.  
 Ἀνέβαινα στὸ ταβάνι καὶ γύριζα πίσω στὴν καρέκλα  
 καὶ ξανά στὸ ταβάνι καὶ ξανά στὴν καρέκλα.  
 Βγῆκα λίγο στὸ μπαλκόνι.  
 Ὅσο τὸ σπίτι τόσο τὸ μπαλκόνι.  
 Στὴ μιά του ἄκρη τὰ ροῦχα ἀπλωμένα.  
 Στὴν ἄλλη ἀπλωμένος ἐγώ.  
 Συναγωνιζόμασταν ποιὸς κρέμεται καλύτερα.

### ἄδυναμία

Τὰ μάτια του.  
 Τὰ μάτια του εἶναι ὁμορφα.  
 Ὅταν φοροῦν τ' ἀγαπημένα μου παπούτσια,  
 γίνονται ἄλλα.  
 Τὰ μάτια του εἶναι λέξεις ποὺ δὲν χωροῦν σὲ ποίημα.  
 Τὰ μάτια τοῦ μπαμπᾶ.

ἀδυναμία

Μοῦ ἤρθε πίσω τὸ δέμα.

– Ἄλλη φορὰ νὰ μὴ μᾶς εἰρωνεύεστε, κύριε.  
– Μὰ γιατί; Τὰ χαμογελαστὰ κορδόνια εἶναι ὠραῖα.

Θέλω νὰ ξαναδῶ ἐκεῖνα σου τὰ μάτια.

ἀδυναμία

Κατέβηκα τὸ πρωὶ στὴ λεωφόρο.

Σοροὶ σωριασμένες σωρηδόν.

Τὶς βάζανε μιὰ μιὰ σ' ἓνα φορτηγό. Μεγάλο  
φορτηγό, μὲ ρόδες μεγάλες.

Ἐτοιμάζονται, φαίνεται, γιὰ μεγάλο ταξίδι.

Μὰ ποῦ πᾶνε ὅλοι αὐτοὶ οἱ νεκροί;

Ποῦ πᾶνε οἱ νεκροὶ ὅταν πεθαίνουν, μπαμπά;

ἀδυναμία

Τὸν μπαμπά μου κατάφερα νὰ τὸν βάλω σὲ ποίημα.

Τὸ κάπνισμα δὲν κατάφερα ποτὲ νὰ τὸ κόψω,  
ὅμως κάθε φορὰ ποὺ δένω τὰ κορδόνια μου  
σωριάζομαι μπρὸς στὸν καθρέφτη  
καὶ μὲ κοιτῶ γιὰ ὧρες.

Ἐτοιμάζομαι γιὰ τὶς καινούργιες μέρες.

Φορῶ ὅ,τι βρῶ μπροστά μου καὶ πάω στὸ  
ταχυδρομεῖο συχνά.

Μ' ἀρέσουν τὰ γραμματόσημα –

ἔχω πάντα κάπου ν' ἀκουμπῶ τὴ γλώσσα μου.