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I Remember Clearly

Imre Oravecz

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I REMEMBER CLEARLY

the first time you came, you wore a short skirt, a transparent blouse, light sandals, your luggage was light as a feather, and you too were somehow light as a feather, sunny as the spring you came in, wide-awake, responsive to everything, and youthful, almost a child, and your body too almost a child's, downy and fresh, you told me in detail what the passport and customs inspection was like, what scenery you saw from the train window, how people treated you on the journey, and what it felt like to be in the *eastern bloc* for the first time, and you were surprised at what to me was unexceptional, and you found unexceptional what I was surprised at, you liked the city, you liked the old villas, the streets, the bridges, the confectioneries, the museums, the swimming pools, the police uniforms, the streetcars, and you tried ardently in bed to make up for what you missed in the meantime, and you always saw to it that I was pleased with everything, because you were pleased with everything, and you delighted in everything, in me, in yourself, in the world, and I remember clearly the last time you came, you wore a long two-piece suit, a bulky sweater, a pair of walking shoes, your luggage was heavy, and you too were somehow heavier and overcast as the fall you came in, withdrawn, already indifferent to certain things, and older, a real woman, and your body too a real woman's, mature and tired, you made no mention of what the passport and customs inspection was like, what scenery you saw from the train window, how people treated you on the journey, and what it felt like to be in the *eastern bloc* once again, you were no longer surprised at what to me was unexceptional, and you did not find unexceptional what I was surprised at, you were indifferent to the city, unmoved by the old villas, the streets, the bridges, the confectioneries, the museums, the swimming pools, the police uni-

forms, and you no longer tried so ardently in bed to make up for what you'd missed in the meantime, and you did not always see to it that I was pleased with everything, because you were no longer pleased with everything, and you no longer delighted so much in everything, in me, in yourself, in the world.

Translated from the Hungarian by **Bruce Berlind** with **Mária Kőrösy**