

# Tomaz Salamun

## Koper's Gym

Pesticides,  
brushes,  
faith,  
hair on the wet roof of my face,  
of my swing.

Of my dunes,  
of my cuttlefish and my steppes.

I'm cleaning silver.  
It chomps into whiteness and reminds me  
of talcum at the battle, of the Raft of  
Medusa, of calluses and of  
inelastic rings.

And of that weird stench  
In the church, where under Janowski's yelling  
we powdered the rings and made lion  
vaults, although I lost my tooth  
on the cement, outside, not in the church,  
during the basketball game with Ilirska Bistrica.

My mother cried more than she did during the war,  
more than when grandmother died.  
All that made  
history I told you with my  
artificial left incisor as  
a cripple.

Translated from the Slovenian by Peter Richards and the author

## On Via Boscovich

The receptionist on Via  
Boskovich goes out  
every hour  
to see if my car is still there.  
In the morning I have capuccino  
and give a gift to the chambermaid, a lot of  
rice. I was treated as  
le grand seigneur,  
il professore,  
he who, far off in the dark countries,  
got into trouble,  
gentilissimo, educatissimo.

When we all discovered with relief  
that I don't smuggle drugs or weapons  
but cheap jewelry which I  
stuff into cardboard boxes and  
glue back together, we  
laughed conspiratorially and  
felt better. From this,  
pounds and pounds of rice  
on every visit for everyone.

Translated from the Slovenian by Joshua Beckman and the author

# They're confiscated somewhere, I try to live

"Little gutter, I'll equip you with quotes." Anonymous

"Religious mania travels faster than wind." Anonymous

"The hump force itself into the sand." Anonymous.

"I stepped into an armored car." Me.

A gram of white sack raves into the night.  
A snow mass drips in the claw.

You plow with a toadstool.  
Leaves are dancing.  
Bach, Bach, Bach, Bach.  
Ingarden has a small stove.  
He lives in an abandoned house.

The beast rests in the ell.  
Straight is the outline between forehead and hair.

Translated from the Slovenian by Thomas Kane and the author