

# Generation

*Tomaž Šalamun, Translation Michael Thomas Taren*

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Did the stone fall into water?  
Did the fish open its mouth just below  
the surface and suck midge?  
Did you touch the white wall-tiles of telegraph poles?  
I sink into myself as if into a mountain.  
I caress the coalmine handcars,  
the white shoulders  
of warm muffs.  
*Let's exchange*, runs every seduction.  
You give me passion, I give you  
enormous ping-pong table's throat,  
airplanes on it, the navy. The mountain's  
mouth that will vomit them. The ultimate  
speed that will petrify enemy soldiers. It is  
accomplished.  
We have to train salt pillars to blow  
their mind back to them, to pawn them as  
scenery. We know their eye dribbled out.  
The diamond on its apex generates fire.  
Look! That's why I can step behind your shoulder  
and dictate to you the desire, the hunger, the picture.  
That's why I can bowl you precisely  
as the dark fresh young king,  
to entrench you as my gentle paw.

*translated from the Slovenian*

# An Old Song

*Tomaž Šalamun, Translation Michael Thomas Taren*

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I exist  
only  
so that  
when I  
die my  
friend  
will put  
his  
hand  
on  
my  
fore  
head.

*translated from the Slovenian*