

Who cries above me

Natalia Gorbanevskaya

Why speak of trouble, or beauty
when the happy body, forgetful,
naked as the thief's upon the cross,
itself wants to be deceived.

Who weeps, who cries above me,
crossing the frontier of snow,
where the wintry wind, the icy wind,
chills the bright waters of a spring.

And in this unearthly merging of passions,
this parting of hands, this rarefied breath,
is the cross, the muffled breaking of bones,
and at the stake the crackle and the blaze.

Translated from the Russian by Daniel Weissbort