

# NEODOSLANÝ LIST

Rudolf Dobiáš

Sám s vlastným krížom v chladnej cele  
a predaleko od neba,  
písal som domov: Mám sa skvele  
a ničoho mi netreba.

Keďže ma strážia stráže bdelé,  
nemusím sa báť o seba.  
Viem, že to Boží mlyn ma melie  
a premieňa ma na chleba.

Horúčka, čo mi blčí v tele,  
je zase božská pahreba,  
aj štyri steny čisto biele  
tým čistým Boha vebia.

Naozaj, mama. Mám sa skvele,  
len mi je smutno bez teba.

## UNSENT LETTER

Rudolf Dobiáš

With my own cross in one cold cell  
and far from Heaven indeed,  
I wrote home: I feel very well,  
there's nothing that I need.

The guardians guard me watchfully,  
what can I have to dread?  
I know God's mills are grinding me  
and turning me to bread.

My body now so fever-bright  
is God's own burning coal,  
and these four walls of purest white  
exalt Him and extol.

Mama, I'm feeling fine. It's true,  
but I'm sad not to be with you.

(from the collection *Bells and Graves*,  
in the section *Events from the Dusk*,  
translated by John Minahane)

# KAM ODCHÁDZATE, JÁCHYMOVSKÍ CHLAPCI

Rudolf Dobiáš

*(Za Štefanom Paulíny)*

Kam odchádzate, jáchymovskí chlapci?  
Rudenku hľadať, fárať do bane?  
Po toľkých rokoch a po takej pláči  
byť zase na dne a zas na rane?

Kam odchádzate, jáchymovskí chlapci?  
Odviežť sa v kletke, visieť na lane,  
a potom ako špendlík zatvárací  
dve ruky zopnúť k márnej obrane?

Či azda chcete, jáchymovskí chlapci,  
znovu vziať ťažký krompáč do dlane,  
pod zemou hľadať, hoci nevidiaci,  
jas Božej lásky v čiernom uráne?

Či trúfate si, jáchymovskí chlapci,  
dobehnúť ešte vlaky zmeškané  
a potom ako sťahovaví vtáci  
do vetra zvolať svoje volanie?

Kam odchádzate, jáchymovskí chlapci?  
Rudenku hľadať, fárať do bane,  
na novom diele pokračovať v práci,  
odznova plniť staré poslanie?

Povedzte, prosím, jáchymovskí chlapci:  
Keď odídete, kto nám zostane?

# WHERE ARE YOU OFF TO, MEN OF JÁCHYMOV?

(after Štefan Paulíny)

Where are you off to, men of Jáchymov?  
Will you go down the mine to seek the ore?  
After so many years and so much weeping,  
back at the bottom, will you drudge once more?

Where are you off to, men of Jáchymov?  
To be conveyed in cages, hang from ropes,  
and later, like a safety-pin, to fasten  
two praying hands with insubstantial hopes?

Maybe your wish is, men of Jáchymov,  
to swing the heavy pick again till numb;  
seeking below the ground, though you see nothing,  
God's loving light in black uranium?

Or will you venture, men of Jáchymov,  
to chase the trains you missed in times gone by,  
and afterwards, like birds when they're migrating,  
utter to all the passing winds your cry?

Where are you off to, men of Jáchymov?  
Will you go down the mine to seek the ore,  
doing new tasks but in continued service,  
at your old calling as you were before?

Tell me, please, tell me, men of Jáchymov:  
Who will remain for us when you're no more?

(from the collection *Between Grass and Wind. Poems from a Future Legacy*,  
in the section *To Friends*, translated by John Minahane)