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Those Were The Days

2.

after Sandra has gone
in casual conversations
even with strangers
I was forced to answer questions like
what are you going to do up there
why did your girlfriend leave
why couldn't she find a job here
would she be able to use her diploma
is life good up there
regardless of who I spoke to
I always repeated the same answers
when they told me
that they would go too
if only there was an opportunity
that the situation here is awful
that in a year or two it would be like in Chile here
I lifted up my glass or my cup
and started to roll it slowly on the table
then we went quiet for a while
waiting for something to happen
upon meeting them later in the town
they would pat me on my shoulder commenting
you're still here
when are you leaving
how's your girlfriend

6.

I remember
how it was nice in Pula
in Valsaline Bay
in our room with six beds
an extraordinary summer
our first spent together
we absorbed everything around us
playing chess
making friends with the staff
and one little girl
the daughter of a waiter and waitress
she described to us
what we have seen
that is Jackson
even during summer he is wearing a coat
there are some strange people in Villa Idola
in our white tee shirts
we were sitting on the terrace
watching the baptism
the girl said
that she had never seen
a bicycle at a baptism
we were visiting monuments habitually
taking pictures by their side

7.

our journey was stopped
after thirty minutes
Slovenian border
our policemen were on strike
well, they're working around the clock
asking stupid questions
we'll stop again in three hours
darkness coldness road toilet
cough cigarettes wind
on the Italian border
our driver gave the customs officer
two Coca-Cola cans
the next six hours
we were driving on the highway
only one short stop at around
three in the morning Switzerland
everybody out of the bus
turistiko
si turistiko
customs officers were young and beefy
soon after Lucerne
comes Zurich
said a passenger

9.

you are so soft
your arms are stretched
because of the plastic bags
from the shopping at Migros
certain things are always
and everywhere the same
we were not running from that
I'll take those bags
I said to her
on our way home
we have serious conversations
we can spot strangers very easily
colorful children pass us by
on metallic scooters
in this building apartment rents were low
and there was nobody from our country
the telephone seldom rings
you answer
using your Slavic family name
with all those č and ć

12.

we will always be strangers here
they hate them
look at them
crowding the streets
Swiss people do not know
how to pronounce our names
they are cold and do not
care for anybody
they have those eye-shields
like horses to look straight ahead
man, it won't be easy for us here
then we started dancing
and singing Sinatra in translation
Ausländer in der nacht
the room it was dark
I was kissing her hair
thinking
in our case
it will be different

Translated by Miloš Đurđević