

Klaus Høeck

CANZONE

POEMS

I

7

Come out to Nørrebro, come out here and see
the wounded steel and anger of the asphalt.
Come and see five square kilometres' gestalt
brimful of smoke and crushed human dignity.

Every morning the shadow draws the new day
in the cracked layers nameless facades' display.
By pent-up fugginess fury is beset
and drudgery hovers on its wing of sweat.

Come and hear a drawn-out elegy of keys
from the backyard ghetto with its open doors.
The chalk crosses that are daubed on all the walls

are they graffiti of hatred or of pain?
You who only live in what is pure theory
how will you solve the enigmas of practice?

8

Come out to Nørrebro, come out here and see
the bonfires' tiger skin and all the cables
hanging like the cobweb of some gigantic
spider over the barricades, come and see

the violence beyond description when the
police storm through the city streets dressed in their
dust-blue combat uniforms and their helmets
complete with perspex visors (just like the troops

*aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaddddddddddeeeeeee
eeeeeffffffggggggggggiiiiikllllll
nnnnrrrrrrrrrrrrrrsssssstttttøøøååå*

found in some science fiction film or other),
come out and see the eyes of the cement or
the wounded steel and anger of the asphalt.

Brimful of smoke and crushed human dignity
 lies the Black Square (which is so-called after an
 ironworks) as a monument to what was un-
 scrupulous speculation and mere profiteer

ing. The floor space ratio is 2.5 po-
 pulation density over five hu-
 ndred per hectare. A blueprint covered by fing-
 erprints and soot's black tracery of lacing.

*soot's black tracery of lacing and soot's and soot's
 draws a draws a draws a draws a draws a draws a
 is is is is is is is is is is it it*

There is no excuse for the high and mighty
 architects or the social authorities.
 Every morning the shadow draws the new day.

Every morning the shadow draws the new day.
 like black rims under eyes and blue marks that tell
 of malnutrition and many blows that fell
 from police truncheons or from some other way

terror naturally arises in a
 space where people are crammed like sardines in a
 tin or less than that. Every morning in air
 of misty propane gas the sun rises, there

*rises in propane gas rises in propane gas
 people are crammed are crammed in propane gas are are
 are are are are are in in fifth Nørrebro*

there to the east over the goods railway ter-
 rain, where its rays gradually go astray
 in the cracked layers nameless facades' display.

13

Nørrebrogade, axis of steel in a
different way: a cherry tree branch, mean pro
portional, flag-lined avenue for all tho
se who believe in ideas, barrica

de between grey and grey, a gutter that's lined
in the body, a neon track through the mind,
the bluebottles' kaleidoscope, petrol tor
nado, the colour of amniotic wa

ters, corroded spirit level, cicero
text, Job's book of asphalt, growthplace of iro
n crosses, pitch-black arteries, star of oil,

the heart's crumpled cartridge paper, crank for the
revolutions of the city, death's papier
mâché glove, small copper coin, worn and spoiled.

14

In the cracked layers nameless facades' display
the history of disease or poverty
can be read without any more ado. Each
wall is a chapter in the story that may

be characterised right from the outset as
a nasty mess. Here you can learn much more a
bout democracy than from all of the acts
of parliament and its fundamental laws.

*in layers layers layers layers seven layers
may may may may may may may Nørrebro
layers layers layers layers layers layers layers*

You can suddenly understand why dreari
ness is unavoidable and also why
by pent-up fugginess fury is beset.

15

By pent-up fugginess fury is beset
though not here precisely in the centre of
Nørrebro, monotony's grey spot where rep
etitions gradually replace each o

ther in a never-ending mirroring
of filthy window-panes. In this part of the
town only 10% of apartments have a
shared bathroom less than 75% a simple thing

*see the apartments the apartments see see see
the drudgery drudgery drudgery drudgery see
sweat sweat sweat sweat sweat sweat sweat see*

like one's own toilet. Therefore the dreams are here
so grimy, are claustrophobically near
and drudgery hovers on its wing of sweat.

16

And drudgery hovers on its wing of sweat
over backyard industries and factories:
General Motors and Schiønning and Arvé, these
smell, no matter by what wind your nose is met,

like dead cats. Storage buildings are often found
where you would have hoped to find a child's playground,
you will discover workshops instead of kind
ergartens, full parking lots are all you find

*come and hear come and hear come the factory
full of the the the industry industry
workshop workshop and industry*

instead of schools. You can find institutions
where all of the doors are locked from the inside.
Come and hear a drawn-out elegy of keys

17

Come and hear a drawn-out elegy of keys
clocks and hairdressers' saloons that disappear
in a rapid succession of clouds of bur
ning feathers and competition. Small grocers

that find themselves squeezed out between the su
permarket's blue pyramids of tinned produce.
Come and hear the the din caused by main tra
ffic thoroughfares where they become large deltas.

*that disappear in clouds that disappear
in clouds that come and hear a drawn-out ele
gy come a hear a drawn-out elegy*

Come and hear the police patrol's piercingly
wailing sirens when they are all re-echoed
from the backyard ghetto with its open doors.

18

From the backyard ghetto with its open doors
guitar playing sometimes is heard as it pours
out into mild summer evenings among ru
ins of Saturn and refuse bins. From time to

time peace sometimes can descend on a public
holiday and people get together just
like that among the skulls of the many cats
so as to celebrate a sudden calm that

*guitar playing is heard get together
to celebrate a sudden calm upward plume
upward plume plume plume among the refuse bins*

comes from the factory wheels that no more turn
the smoke that does not trace its upward plume, from
the chalk crosses that are daubed on all the walls.

19

The chalk crosses that are daubed on all the walls.
Having nothing to do with Christian faith at all
at most a reflex from distant school lessons).
They are an expression of fantasy, of

boredom or of nothing at all. If you venture
deeper into the yards you are pretty sure
to come across hearts, arrows and words or e
ven 'prick' or 'cunt'. Furthest in you may well see

at most a reflex from distant school lessons
at most a reflex from distant school lessons
at most a reflex from distant school lessons

the red five-pointed stars (Red Anarchy) on
doors and woodwork, where people are to be spared.
Are they graffiti of hatred or of pain?

20

Are they graffiti of hatred or of pain
those slogans that have been written across
the roadway of Nørrebrogade: We will
never surrender, – Long live The Building and:

less police force – more kindergartens, or are
they perhaps the most realistic things you
have seen in a long time the most down to
earth? The local politicians fashion their

the local politicians fashion their an
swers in concrete and in office buildings
out in concrete and in office buildings

answers in concrete and in office buildings,
while you can hardly permit yourselves answers,
you who only live in what is pure theory.

You who only live in what is pure theory
 how could you ever acknowledge the filth and
 the oil's peacock wings fully, you who'd gladly
 split a hair in Marx's beard if you could and

discuss angels' auras or write simplistic
 political poems, articles and long
 essays, only have your information
 from the clinical tables of statistics

*aaaaaaaaaddddddddddddddeeeeeee
 eeeeeggggggggggmmmmmmmmnnnnnnnn
 ooooooorttttttttttttøøøååååå*

(extensive rows of what are dead butterflies),
 you who dwell in a hermeneutic circle
 how will you solve the enigmas of practice?

How will you solve the enigmas of practice?
 by sending in reader's letters from Slagel
 se and good advice from residential sub
 urbs (with lily-of-the-valley fragrance or

Solomonic seals). Come out and live here in
 the cramped and narrow passage-like apartments,
 where the widows frizzle up here in the dark
 from too few kisses. Come and live in soda

*aaaaaaaaaddddddddddeeeeeeeeeee
 eeeeeggggggggggiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii
 ttttttttvvvvvyyøøøååååå*

and ashes for a few years, before recom
 mending the policemen to draw their truncheons.
 Come out to Nørrebro, come out here and see.

23

In Ryesgade the sun shines in through my blue
money trees at five o'clock each afternoon
in the summer, even though time in a way
has come completely to a halt (it has stayed

stock-still in the foundation clock opposite).
Not until everything once more is as it
was in the beginning will the great spell be
broken as when a ring in water or sea

suddenly meets its shore. It is a Hell to
live together with you, and it's Hell as well
to have to live without you, my beloved,

but a different kind of Hell one that is
so utterly meaningless as a sky that
is devoid of swallows, an earth without grass.

24

May the seventeenth. I walk down along Fre
densgade. We have done this so often on
our opposite sides, divided by a scarcely
visible boundary. And now I am con

sidering buying begonias or some
other flowers of appeasement. But it's way
too late, I know that. A bottle of Brøndum
snaps instead perhaps? – I have now reached the pave

ment on the corner of Tagensvej. No met
aphors in that connection only a hot
dog stand. I could always buy one yet again,

or something else. I've really no idea.
My indecisiveness increases like the
clouds on the horizon, like an express train.

25

There lies Elmegade. It's perhaps stupid
to say this, but there are no elm trees growing
here blue and majestic on the retina.
Line three passes along it without naked

women at the wheel. There are three secondhand
shops and apart from that just absurdity.
I never thought of that as a street, to me
it was more like a square without water and

located in some distant suburb, but here
it propagates itself through pipes and conduits
into my nerves or maybe the opposite

is true, I now realise and turn off in
to Birkegade, here where nothing grows in
the afternoon's late windowsills anywhere.

26

The strange form of the lamp-globes on Dronning Lou
ises Bro bridge has always reminded me
of October or Nevsky Prospect in Le
ningrad (even though I honestly have to

admit I have never paid it a visit).
The same is also true about love. I know
very little about it in fact, haven't
been much good at it, although I do see it

in a quite special light (as if through sunken
ice) by which I mean that I believe in it.
Also now that it's on the point of ending

in vivid, mighty robes over the harbour.
What would be the point of filling the sky with
one's personal deprivation and one's pain?

27

On Sgt. Hans Torv the constitution's revoked on the green May evenings. And yet the police operates with commando units as in some second-rate war film. Otherwise there's

GUF with its cheap gramophone records there's Pepino's Restaurant, the nick and my shadow which is falling right now out to where Blegdamsvej lies as well as Ivan Malinow

ski's apartment. There he is perhaps sitting waiting for a particular chime from the church clock right opposite, or he is filling

his corncob pipe with cherry leaves before he starts to write a poem about the rain that at this very moment's beginning to fall.

28

In Røvsinggade one side of the street is missing (as it always does in eternity), General Motors lies on the facing side as a guarantee of continuity.

I don't really have much to say at all today, now that the hawthorn in eastern regions has long since been in blossom and already has said everything there was to be

said. I have become completely superfluous, am no longer able to find the middle's clean and sharp glass fragments that then used to

cut me and make me bleed, so that I felt I was alive. A green fatigue's got hold of me as long drawn-out and indifferent as this street.

29

Hello, Fenmarksgade, how can I draw your attention in my direction. Well, I mean: here I am all dressed up in my jeans and in my desert boots, am smoking my usual

Camel and am contemplating the red walls of the block that have been stained by sunsets, is that enough or do I have to shout down your cornices with a stream of imprecations

and oaths, call your chimneys and your TV antennas to prayer like some muezzin or other. How am I ever to put an end to

the utter boredom of this social housing, which certainly kills far more people here than love and the final lilac trees still standing?

30

In Slotsgade I find half of a five of diamonds. I do not read any symbols in to this, I merely take note of it as of many of the other facts existing in

Nørrebro. That for example the divorce rate is the highest in the country, the mortality rate is even higher, wear and tear resulting from people's workplaces an

increasing problem. I take note of the fact merely. Nørrebro, you quite simply devour love with your asphalt and your gutters, you brand

all traces of human decency with your drainpipes and your bricks, and you both consume and swallow your fellow human beings intact.

At Blågårds Plads the window panes gleam more clearly than with mists on this May day, blue with shadows where I am sitting out here on a bench reading Rupert Brooke's 'War Sonnets' for the twentieth

time. No, my theory has not held water. It is not at all easy to be poor. It is no fun at all to be honest in a world without courage and love. Therefore

this greeting now, my beloved, so as to inform you that it alters nothing except precisely this theory. Each act is equally

difficult, as heavy as a gravestone at Assistens cemetery (not even the angel can annul its materiality).

Yes, precisely here at Assistens cemetery is the only refuge, the only open area in the precinct. And here life reaches its apogee in a quite remarkable

afterbirth of thuja and stone. I can feel the surf and the breakers down there in the depths around my roots almost like an orgasm, and the lilacs' scent is as rare

as the nape of your neck, my beloved, when I am most in need of you, the days when I can only believe in one god. And I know

that everything will return with the exception of our love, because it transformed us, and because it has conquered death in doing so.

I know full well why I'm standing in Titan
gade: so as to write about it. I can
close my eyes, and then it lives on as a white
after-image. And if I open them slight

ly, it shows itself as a red gash behind
my eyelashes, but in actual fact it
is a large and open industrial street
an unsuitable place to live for mankind

unhealthy for cats, sparrows and serrated
garlands of beech trees. There's nothing except e
namel and chrome that can thrive in this precinct.

Both company directors and property
owners should try living here in the stinking
pollution they have produced and created.

Yes, yes, Jagtvej – now it is your turn. On my
bike I swish through your blue proportions. My bike
ride takes me past pharmacies, pillar boxes
and what are called statistical offices,

where the bees drown in ink. A little acid
and yellow with chemicals, an angle bar
in the city. An exception admitted
ly in my context. Perhaps because a girl

I knew committed suicide here, or be
cause a friend realised your museums by
travelling to Bolivia, or because

your delta finally opens out in Ø
sterbro. I haven't the faintest idea.
But today you have the scent of wild horses.

Åboulevarden or Rantzausgade? I
 choose the latter on account of the dirt, the
 dark as well as that which is not. We have not
 walked hand in hand among the furniture shops

here, my beloved. We have never walked in
 to what's called the Rhubarb precinct in order
 to buy a bookcase or painted corner
 shelf, and in that way we have never left it

again. And at the point where it crosses tracks
 with Griffengade we once waited for the
 lights to turn green (remember I let out the

clutch too late on my BSA and nearly got killed?).
 And that bloody crossroads moves with us, it's still
 something we still carry around on our backs.

Well I'm darned! there are field mustard and dande
 lions growing in Lygten street: a last source
 of consolation at the very last bor
 ders. Although the very last will always be

the very last. Here a quotation from an
 y bible won't help you. The first shall be the
 first, the poor the poor, and so on, for ever
 and ever in all eternity, amen!

In the capital's circles are no squares that
 could possibly remedy these facts. So let
 us therefore for the time being stop off at

Café Lygten, my beloved, to forget
 everything that is disagreeable un
 der the silver shadow of the CHP station.