

F o r L i l i !

It was in the year 1932 --  
This may not be exactly the right date, but I know  
That around this year  
I met you for the first time.  
In joyful expectation I approached  
California with Otto.  
However, an evil influenza bug  
had fallen in love with me quite fervently . . .

Oh, how gloomy had become that land for me  
where lemons blossom!

\*

Whether yellow or green  
Countryside - rain or sunbeams -  
It was all the same to me  
Who lay in bed, ill, feverish.

And, on the first day already,  
You appeared, beloved Lili,  
And you dragged along that Doctor Marx.

\*

Otto, who wanted to protect you  
From all those grim contagious dangers,  
You simply laughed at.  
Such an influenza is not scaring you  
By a long shot!  
You danced around the bed of that poor sick woman  
As if those feverish hallucinations  
Had just become a vision . . . And you were laughing  
And you yelled, and you managed  
That the fever actually went up . . .

But, on the other hand,  
The pleasure of your presence was great,  
Even though it did scare me  
That at "106" I did see half a dozen Lilis . . .

\*

Then, when I was well again  
I got acquainted with Nadja, and Grandma  
And Aunt too (At that time, was she "in a coma" yet? . . .)  
You have cared for those two just beautifully.  
And you have not even shied away  
From repeatedly swearing to Grandma every day  
That in the end you would finally  
Give in to Brahms . . .

However, she would after all have to admit  
That Beethoven was, after all, the better catch . . .

Although, dear Grandma, Kaiser Wilhelm  
is not a dog, after all !!!

\*

And, speaking thus, you dipped those two oldies  
Into their morning bath, might they grumble or not.

Their heads were scrubbed clean

\*

Then they were pushed into the car  
And driven all through Hollywood.  
They were  
Famous in all the parking lots  
And with enjoyment  
They used to spend hours there,  
Give audiences

Until you led them home again.

You truly touched my heart with those two old girls, both of them!

\*

- - - - -  
And now, let's now turn with pleasure  
To all those others who stroll through life with you:  
There is, first of all,  
I am calling him with pleasure and a bow  
And humble shows of high esteem -

The charming Sergey with sex appeal . . .

I will not make an effort  
to describe  
that virtuous, noble boy  
in your many-colored pictures.

So far as I know,  
the saints in heaven  
have assembled in a sublime throng  
in order that they may offer Sergey  
a seat of honor when, in a hundred years,  
he comes riding up into heaven.

Every single saint will lead Sergey  
up to his throne which is pink in color. \*

They were all trying to outdo each other  
and, what a scandal!  
They started fighting in the heavenly hall!  
At first they only tore each other a little bit  
at their curls -

But then - and I know this will shock you! - \*

They removed their halos from their bald heads  
and used them to slap each other in the face . . .

(I do hope that this exalted poem  
will not one day pass by the heavenly censor authorities . . .  
This might result in a complaint against me,  
the poor sinner . . .

Passport  
Please

H E A V E N  
Entrance forbidden  
to sinners

But, I would so much like to sing along with the harp  
as an angel - drycleaned, all in white -  
with golden wings, elegantly trimmed according to heavenly fashions . . .)

\*

Sergey, then, stands in high favor  
with all the world. He has a wife. (What a pity!)  
I need not really mention  
that in Sergey's heart  
Britta does not have any rival.  
It is with a lot of pain  
and paleness stemming from envy  
that one has to grant her this:  
She does look like Greta Garbo.

\*

And with all that she is managing  
her house in an exemplary fashion. And she also knows how to cook!  
(I do think that's really enough now! (say: "enuuf" . . .))  
Since I am just talking about cooking:  
Every  
cooking housewife around the world  
has not ever, dear Lili, achieved what you  
have, up to the present hour!  
It does seem to me, though,  
that it is your genius more than your reason  
that is at work  
when you mix together miraculous meals . . .  
For many moons already you have been  
gabbing of Kathi Smith -

\*

\*

\*

But you have not sent her shit !!!  
She would surely be delighted  
by your main recipe, the "green" one  
which you were to describe to her  
with bold, inventive words . . .  
Oh yes, you have been wanting to  
do this for such a long time !!! . . .

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But now,  
I want to talk about Nadja

Who bewitches everyone she encounters  
right away.  
She swears  
that she finds men to be horrible . . .

However, it is not only Bob  
whom she winds around her neck  
as a victor's wreath . . .

(In any case, this is a beautiful picture! ...)  
Who knows what happened in Argentina !!!  
Well, and then ---on the ocean ? ? ?

\*

Well, I rather think we should keep  
a discretionary silence . . .

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And, of course, Meta is part of the family,

Who courageously bears joy and pain  
with you and all the others  
and who, emotionally and  
joyfully takes part in dramatic comedies  
and tragedies which never end tragically,  
with which the Petschnikoff's imagination  
decorates life  
in word and deed and melody . . .

For example: quite delighted are you and have been for years  
with "Posi", this marvellous one.  
For years you have been trying to  
describe her to me in bunches of  
rainbows, so to speak.

Making fast endeavours to soften  
the hot tear which came pouring out  
of your blue eyes,  
I say, unsuspectingly,  
that I find her to be truly delightful.  
O, woe to me, the innocent, inexperienced child !!!  
You are already bearing those white teeth  
(which Hayward has polished for you so that they  
glitter like beautiful pearls out of your mouth . . .)

And you are saying - and fire is bursting  
out of your looks which are raging with anger -

That my delight seems  
strange and peculiar . . .  
And that it was quite clear to you  
that I in the joy of madness  
was struggling in the siren's net  
which that damned Posi was weaving around me . . .

Yes, I trembled  
in a crazed, medieval love, so to speak  
in the nets of this old spider . . .  
Or, what was that about with Madame Israel? . . .  
Well - :  
For weeks I heard about this angelic creature,  
who was gliding nobly, lovely and exquisitely  
through unworthy worlds,  
spreading happiness and sunshine . . .

When I was saying that she looked like an old lion

You almost cried -  
told me of her noble life  
with a trembling, soulful shiver.  
When you brought her along to Hope Ranch,  
you still made me believe that she was totally "comme il faut" . . . \*

But even then I was suspecting  
that in the corners of your eyes,  
there, secretly, was lurking  
a quite suspicious, blue twinkle -  
proclaiming disaster,  
igniting itself,  
waiting in ambush . . .  
And, soon, a storm of hail  
comes showering down  
over "Aimsys" noble limbs . . .

(Perhaps now you will like it again  
if I do call her "old lion" - quite rotten ? ? ? . . .)

However, beloved Lili, do know this:

I find Lochners and Rauschnings quite likable -  
and I do say so emphatically!

Your friendship for them is truly great, isn't it?

God - how life is without problems !!! . . .

Amy, too, you really like -

and, joyfully, I am permitted to like them . . .

Amen!

-----  
What else am I to tell you, beloved Lili?

When during the winter we are complaining

and behaving "California-addicted",

then, a phantom appears before

our eyes out of the horizon:

Sunny,

surrounded by the scent of oranges,

your pictures arises before us.

Mildly you smile, with miraculous blue eyes . . .

And with delight

I have named you "Miss California" !

And now today - hand in hand

with all those who are lovingly united here,

we want to celebrate a birthday.

However, it seems to me

that this figure is just a little crazy:

Yes, one keeps forgetting,

looking at you, how time flies . . .

Your indestructible spirit

seems timeless . . .



This is just a joke, isn't it:

You - - - - - that many years ? ? ?

God forbid !

Well, we do know

that the Petschnikoffs have to exaggerate all the time . . .

Happy Birthday to you    Happy Birthday to you    Happy Birthday

Dear Lili

happy birthday to you !!!

December 1st