

Fall 1975

Two Poems translated by Rich Ives

Hans Magnus Enzensberger

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LITTLE FALL DEMON

after sulfur stinks up your yellow crest
those hands hold a coal fire
those eyes glitter huge
and there is mouse blood in your pot

you dance like shiny elms over the roof
with long spindly finger
keep numerous brown mongrels in the dungeon
and create the surly trouble

your pipe blows the smoke of leaves
and death's hand over the countryside
and like a tin bell's song
you soon fade into the marsh

there you sleep like fortune for the year
until saint stephan wakes you strangely
with the frantic quadrille
and great death constant with crickets

—hans magnus enzensberger
Translated by Rich Ives

KITCHEN CHAIN

on a nothing but lazy afternoon, today
i see in my house
through the open kitchen door
a milk can an onion board
a cat dish.
on the table lies a telegram.
i have not read it.

in a museum in amsterdam
i see in an old picture
through the open kitchen door
a milk can a bread basket
a cat dish.
on the table lies the newspaper.
i have not read it.

in a summerhouse on the moskwa
i see for a few weeks
through the open kitchen door
a bread basket an onion board
a cat dish.
on the table lies the newspaper.
i have not read it.

through the open kitchen door
i see gutter-running milk
thirty-year-old wars
teardrops on onionboards
anti-rocket rockets
breadbaskets
class struggles.

to the left at the foot of it all in the angle
i see a cat dish.

—hans magnus enzensberger
Translated by Rich Ives