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Paths

Mak Dizdar

You have resolved that I shall not be and at all costs
You come towards me and in your haste
Laughing and weeping
You sweep
And destroy
All before you

You have resolved to destroy me at all costs
But you cannot find
The true path
To me

Because
You know the deepcut and wellworn paths
And no other
(And indeed they are narrow and barren
Moreover
For you
The strong and proud
They are hard
And
Long)

You know only those paths
That pass
From heart
And
Eye

But that's not all
There are paths stretching before us
Without clear tracks
Without timetable
Without time
And terminal

You think your journey towards the poor thing that I am
Is quite safe and honorable
Coming
From left
Or
From right

You are wrong to suppose you can reach me
In such directions
From north
Or
South

But that's not all

Pestilence
Always searches
For my eyes cleverly
Under the rye rippling in the wind
Out of the clotted darkness at earth's roots

But from measureless heights
From above
It may crush the ribs
Hardest
It may
It must

But that's not all

You are not aware of the law of the crossroads
Between light
And
Darkness

But that's not all

For least of all you know that in life
The hardest struggle
And the real battles
Are in your own
Being

So you don't know that you are the least evil
Amongst my
Many
Great
Evils

You don't know who

You have to deal with
You know nothing about the map of my paths
You don't know that the path from you to me
Is not the same as the path
From me
To you

You know nothing about my riches
Hidden from your mighty eyes
(You don't know that
Much more
Than you think
Was turned
And
Given me
By Fate)

You have resolved to destroy me at all costs
But you cannot find the true path
To me

(I understand you:
You are a man in one space and time
Who lives only now and here
And knows nothing about the infinite
Space of time
In which I am
Present
From distant yesterday
Till distant tomorrow
Thinking
Of you

But that's not all)

Translated by Anne Pennington – (1934-1981)

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