

Zukunftstraurigkeit d'amour

By Nicola Bullock

Yesterday I took a long nap.

After pulling closed my blackout curtains I lay down in my bed, still and waiting for the speed of light to stop. The darkening descended and it came as no surprise. My blanket settled and then it settled some more and then it pressed me down, it pressed me down through the bed. There the floor was cold and hard. I could have swallowed my own throat when I realized I wasn't alone. An old friend of mine was there, a friend from long ago I hadn't seen in ages. What are you doing here? I asked. An obvious but important question in this kind of situation. She cradled me like a small spoon and said nothing but it poured from her regardless. Heavy tears and hot dropped from her eyes down to my cheeks and then to puddles on the floor.

Puddles on the floor

Close the bedroom door

We've done this all before

Zukunftstraurigkeit d'amour

(What is *Zukunftstraurigkeit d'amour*?)

The literal translation from German and French is *future grief of love* (n.).

But I think of it as a verb- *grieving for the things that we love and have not yet lost,*
but know that we will one day lose.

A subtle voice implores

We willfully ignore

Zukunftstraurigkeit d'amour

Quoth the Raven, 'Nevermore'

Examples: “*Zukunftstraurigkeit d’amour* (n.) pierces the unsuspecting heart in the midst of a caress from its beloved like the afternoon sun peeking over my curtain rod pierces the darkness of my room as I’m trying to take a long nap,” or,
“Despite her lying here right beside me, I *Zukunftstraurigkeit d’amour* (v.)
for her death and cannot stop my weeping.”)

Inside the cave which was once underneath my bed and underneath the waterfall who was once my only friend and it seemed that she wouldn’t stop pouring. She wet my clothes and the floorboards as well. At least it felt warm and I wasn’t alone. To pass the time I closed my eyes and thought of things long past.

Her.

She surprised me when we first met because I hadn’t expected her. I threw myself on her mercy and she welcomed me and guided me through. In exchange she left me homeless, and then she left no trace. I danced by myself and waited for something to happen. Needless to say it did not. My poetry reads, I’d give it all for you! But I know it’s not true and the guilt is like lead. I chose other things instead and I am happily light, like a feather.

Meanwhile the puddles on the floor rocked us gently like two lake-boats. Her grief arms wrapped around me as I lay in awkward wait. It was my turn to talk but I forgot what to say so I held myself close and there was no going back.

Impulses in store

Once a burden, now a bore

I won’t do just anything anymore

Zukunftstraurigkeit d’amour

We started out friends but I wanted something more. When she offered me loneliness I received it with grace. We had lots of fun in public and private. She’d wake me up crying in the middle of the night so I’d make her laugh and restore her faith. One time we danced together at a party. I was afraid of her body in motion and I wished for her to die, I loved her so.

Years went by. I buried myself alone throat-deep and thought of how nice life would be with a cat. But she (my friend, not the cat) was always one step ahead and denied me my cat. I could have lost it but instead I stopped trying. There was simply no more I could sacrifice for her so I threw out the baby with the bathwater, and got myself a kitten.

Huddled on the floor

Continuing to pour

She'll abandon me once more

Zukunftstraurigkeit d'amour

The emptiness she left tore up my insides. I screamed and yelled that I wanted her back. I cried rivers and lakes, I wrote poetry and songs. In a letter to her I offered to kill my cat.

When she didn't respond I got angry and hated her. I threw tantrums in my room and one time I almost threw my cat out the window (poor cat). I apologized to my cat. She forgave me but I couldn't forgive my old friend.

My heart could take no more (*Zukunftstraurigkeit d'amour*) so my chest collapsed. I entered the hospital at noon. After three intensive surgeries with expert doctors using metal tools I could breathe myself again. After a full recovery in the hospital I came home and took a long nap.

Puddles on the floor

Rock the heart restored

Two lake-boats came unmoored

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Anyway, no matter, that was very long ago and here we are. I trace a circle around her elbow so lightly with my finger that her pouring starts to ebb. It's not the first time we lie here under the bed. Patience and dark coax her back from the dead.

Her outline begins to fade and I know that she will soon go. Her last breath warms my cheek and it reminds me of the spring. I inhale as she dissolves and my lungs fill with tears like a fish.

When my cat wakes me up, the puddles have dried. She likes to play with my feet. I like to sit with her in the sun. I asked her one time, does she know about *Zukunftstraurigkeit d'amour*? She is a good observer and watches me closely. Nonetheless she ignored my question.

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