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## Three Prose Poems: Unnatural Acts | Easter | St. John the Divine

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## Three Poems

Anne Elezabeth Pluto

### Unnatural Acts

Great, great, great grandfather  
you lie in ice  
layers of Russian  
winter, in sleep  
I travel miles  
countries by foot  
to reach the night  
of your grave  
in the Catholic part  
of the cemetery  
I dig through  
snow, ice, break  
my nails to scratch  
open the pine box  
cracked wooden  
ornament of time  
its silence startles even  
me, and you are there  
precious bone wool suit  
dried red flowers  
mark the space that was  
your heart - pearls fused  
to gems, a rosary  
where I am

the last bead  
the end of a long  
chain, your marriage  
for land, not love  
to an Orthodox woman.

I am left  
alone, great, great, great  
grandfather and pull you  
cold, bones to my coat  
kiss your teeth, breathe  
air, frost into your suit  
it swells, flesh  
of the man who made  
the man who made  
the man who made  
the woman who gave  
the child a heart  
to see the dead

through dreams.

I am alive and with  
your silvered cross cut open  
the space above my heart,  
it bleeds through layers  
of cotton, wool, silk  
I stop time  
give you this  
my blood of memory, greedy  
your bone lips drink  
and I watch a man  
appear before my eyes.

I say your name  
in Russian, Czech, and English

*Simon Peter*

*I will make you  
a fisher of men.*

Your answer, voice of all  
my dead, beloved ghosts  
Chorus of Belorussian voices  
iconostasis of my body  
bloom now to me, you know  
my name, press my warm  
hair to your face. I  
am not afraid

and raise you up one step  
into the cold snow,  
my boots press downward  
**I lead you,**  
instinct, sense of other life,  
not my own, but yours  
the light I made from darkness,  
I whisper \*  
across these miles  
of love and granite markers.

*\* Means both Easter and Sunday in Russian*

## **Easter**

the emerald parlor  
remembered, come yourself  
to convince me now impose  
yourself firm to the  
maroon furrow  
a single wound of blood  
that is my heart.

Interloper, make your mayhem  
here, where I have been  
miserable - christen me  
this burglar  
who has stolen time and  
time again my sins rise,  
duplicate with yours,  
a column of white ash,  
our own promiscuous rupture  
of faith. I will give  
you back the way home  
assent from the cross  
gnaw through me to my bone  
and there write beautiful  
the names of all  
our dead in your salt  
milk be my confessor  
coax me, plunge sincere  
the epistle of silence

handwriting on the wall  
and beside me, the cross  
lay sown, mount me glaring  
move finally bruised  
in the disjointed  
homily of sex from which  
we will abstain, but  
not to disappoint, the  
long lure of love burns  
celestial in the dark  
to domesticate the night,  
each star numerous  
in its power to assail us  
now, in our charter of rebirth.

## **St. John the Divine**

Legend has you  
the evangelist, the writer  
the one who knew both Christ  
and the Word.

It is Epiphany  
I am a child  
in a red wool dress  
the black and gold flowers  
move against my legs and arms.  
They imprison me.

It is Epiphany  
your icon burns  
as I kiss your mouth  
my heart floats beneath the field  
of red and black and gold  
You are real  
and whisper my name  
through the glass and jewels.