

**Ronya Othmann**

*toss the little snapdragons  
behind you | that nothing fits  
with | from the natural history  
museum i know | you lie on  
thin sheets as on paper | a doe  
hounded into snow*

*Translated by Michaela Kotziers*



**[toss the little snapdragons behind you]**

toss the little snapdragons behind you. you  
must not turn around. leave everything  
behind that reminds you of her. the  
rubbish before the gate, you will spell that  
in winter, as a sparrow spells march.  
you already forgot what it was.  
snow, as if it had never been here.  
empty courtyard entries, a false  
claim, the black-eyed susan  
behind your back. no name for  
your girl. the village has no home for  
you. you can't even live  
in the woods. you ask yourself, while you  
go, if it is the pavement that cannot  
carry your shoes, or your shoes  
not the pavement.

**[that nothing fits with]**

that nothing fits with what i can  
write under january. her hair on  
my pillow still not enough for a  
wig. i wish for hospital  
beds like ships. white sheets, i give  
everything away. arms, legs, torso, ovaries.  
twilight is settling, drop for drop.  
her hands are not the ones that  
twist and turn me. i search the blue  
for signs. under my  
closed eyes. steps, her jacket  
flapping around the hips, a knock on  
wood, the door. it is not the time for  
geraniums.

**[from the natural history museum i know]**

from the natural history museum i know:  
if i grind sand between my  
fingers, soil and coal, the vines  
unrobe, the boar is riled up, rises up,  
trims surrounding time. how are these  
trees to be understood. and do the  
hairs on my body count as a meadow. it's simplest to love  
backwards. if while singing you join  
a bird, you can do without the  
whistling sound. from the natural history  
museum i do not know: is that my  
forest or yours. and a recoil that  
grows in the grasses, like a  
racket, gray in an ash, a  
reaper too, a searcher, a looker, a  
cause for. where to with the scab.

**[you lie on thin sheets as on paper]**

you lie on thin sheets as on  
paper, a fluttering moth, a  
delicate animal. i push your arms and  
legs aside, their weight and you into  
sleep. more cannot be staked out  
by this field and to what ends. before  
the house there stands rain and i in shoes.  
how does a stranded doe act.  
and now. only barley and crops wherever  
you go. pin room, my  
pinned hem is wet. and the place to wait  
a piece of floor, a light speck, will  
soon be its surrounding. i go though  
bittersweetly. one must push something  
in between like straw, that  
muffles the step. you cannot read into  
the spores. i linger in the  
herbarium.

## [a doe hounded into snow]

A doe hounded into snow, toward the vanishing point. as if  
everything were only a  
sketch. the spruces have cleared. wherever you look, fieldwork.  
i do not have another, only this plowing up, drudging around,  
furling about. before it is flush with the white. // i follow no one  
only the  
thawing, this trickling, tumbling. so much is evident. who sketched  
these maps  
and drew these lines. you attempt yourself a little, take  
as your example the high neck coats, the bleached hair. //  
like an animal that licks its wounds, and i by a sea. but  
here is only corrugated steel. a reverberation from afar, the highway  
washes up all kinds of flotsam and me, with eyes closed // take  
me to the land of my forefathers and a walking stick, so that  
if needed, i can still defend myself in the grave.