

## ALBANIA

**Ismael Kadaret**

### **Poetry**

How did you find your way to me?  
My mother does not know Albanian well,  
She writes letters like Aragon, without commas and periods,  
My father roamed the seas in his youth,  
But you have come,  
Walking down the pavement of my quiet city of stone,  
And knocked timidly at the door of my three-storey house,  
At Number 16.  
There are many things I have loved and hated in life,  
For many a problem I have been an 'open city',  
But anyway...  
Like a young man returning home late at night,  
Exhausted and broken by his nocturnal wanderings,  
Here too am I, returning to you,  
Worn out after another escapade.

And you,  
Not holding my infidelity against me,  
Stroke my hair tenderly,  
My last stop,  
Poetry.

**Rita PETRO**

### **To a poet**

How did you catch my eye so suddenly,  
Together with the wind, the flowers, the trees,  
Together with the song, the river, the sea,  
Together with hope, pain and laughter?  
You caught my eye so suddenly,  
Or were you there from the start?

## PQΣIA

**Regina Derieva**

### **A Poem**

A poem—  
is just one more  
scrap of paper  
that has sailed off the table  
in a bottle  
with a cry for help.

**Yannis Ritsos**

**Necessary Explanations**

There are certain stanzas – sometime entire poems-  
whose meaning not even I know. It is what I do not know  
that holds me still. You were right to ask me. But do not ask me.  
I do not know, I tell you:

Two parallel lights

from the same center. The sound of water  
falling in winter from an overbrimming drain pipe,  
or the sound of a waterdrop as it falls  
from a rose in a watered garden  
slowly, slowly on a spring evening  
like a bird's sobbing. I do not know  
what this sound means; even so, I accept it.  
Whatever I do know, I've clarified for you. I've not been  
neglectful.

But these, too, add to our lives.

I would notice,

as she slept, how her knees formed an angle on the bedsheet-  
It was not only a matter of love. This corner  
was a ridge of tenderness, and the fragrance  
of the bedsheet, of cleanliness, and of spring supplemented  
that inexplicable thing I sought –in vain again- to explain to  
You.