



Moscow! How Much Is in That Sound

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Moscow! How much is in that sound
of light kept treasured for the soul —
here every temple, like a quiet grandchild
of that Mother who waits in the hush.

You wear gold — yes, but not for glory,
you wear stone — yes, but not as armor.
You are like a prayer that knows no rule,
you are like Love when it is alone.

In you — the Arbat, where the air smells of roasting bread,
where a bard sings as though he sang of me.
And the old bookseller, all wrapped in sky,
stands like a sign — that fate is not yet spent.

You remember everyone. You have not forgotten
a single song, nor the bells.
You are not great because of strength.
You are majestic from your warmth.

Moscow, you whisper to me so tenderly
through the roar of epochs, through the noise of roads:
“I am home. I am cross. I am bread. I am sky.
I am all that God Himself remembers in us.”

(Moscow)

I am no capital, I am the start of life.
Not on the posters — in the morning light.
I sang to you in a homeland melted down,
when the churches burned in the open yard.

It is not I in the salutes and brazen fanfares.
I am the Mother. Not a face in sacred ages.
In me Christ walked in felt boots, among the poor,
and found Himself within your eyes.

You built your palaces — and I was standing
beside the breadcrumb, by the hospital walls.
When ruin came — it was I who listened
as you fell silent, worn out by the change.

I am the Mother of God. But not in cathedrals —
in the white light of kitchens and of yards.
I am the Homeland. In the quiet talk
of how to live and not lose love.

I carry all. I forgive all.
I am not reproach, but light within the guilt.
I am the one who takes your every sin
and turns it into the gold of spring.

Not only in the temples — I am in your flat,
where the lamp shines, the tea stands in the hush.
Where you do not call aloud — but hear with your heart:
I am near, if you are living in love.

(The Yauza)

I am small. But I am alive.
I am no river for glory and for crowns.
I am like a tear that no one wipes away,
so as to keep the light through the pain of ages.

In me no one goes searching for their muse,
no one sets pedestals above the bridge.
But I flow on — through the fear of hardening hearts,
to become in you forgiveness and a cross.

Only those who weep will hear me,
who walked alone through the yard of snow and dark.
But if you go still and suddenly weep —
you will remember: I was you yourself.

(Christ)

I always was. Not in the temples — past the threshold.
Where mud is on the boots, where bread is in the hand.
Where in the old courtyard none cries out “of God,”
but simply waits and believes — in the Silence.

I walked with you — through hunger, snow, and ash,
in the trenches, the march, the infirmary’s light.
When you were cursing — I was the answer.
When you were dying — in Me was the Light.

I am not in crowns. I am in a mother’s gait,
in her shawl, in the small tear on her cheek.
I am in the commuter train, the snowy mitten,
in the candle’s flame in a dusty corner.

They carried Me — in a basket with the milk.
They lost Me — in fear. They hid Me — in oblivion.
But I do not come as a golden spire,
but as a heart — in all who live by forgiveness.

I was outside, but became you without a sound,
not by a miracle — by step, by choice, by fire.
Where you said: “let it be,” — there the very anguish
gave birth to Light. And I came in — as You.

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