

METTE MOESTRUP

Love and Mathematics

I drank jasmine tea one January morning in 2004.

I was thrown for a loop and 34 winters.

I felt I was speaking in numbers.

One voice inside me tried to recall an approximately 500-year-old

Korean love poem by Hwang Chin-I (1506-1544),

while a second voice tried to make sense of § 1,1

in the Act to amend the Aliens Act of December 27, 2003.

The first voice asked: What does Hwang Chin-I have to do with § 1,1?

The difference is enormous, said the second,

like that between love and mathematics. Hmm, said the first voice

and whispered *I divided a long January night in two*

and laid the one half under the rug. But the second

called the Ministry of Integration at 33923380,

and an employee, let's call her Alice Mortensen, said that § 1,1

was a "relaxation" of the affiliation requirement for all those above 28

possessing citizenship from birth (and in Denmark *I* was born in 1969).

The rug is *flowery and aromatic as a spring breeze*, but how does the next verse go?

whispered the first voice. But why is there an age limit of 6 years

for children adopted outside Denmark in § 1,1? the second

asked Alice Mortensen, who said that the act treated adopted children from 0-6

years

the same as persons with Danish citizenship from birth (for ex., from 1969)

with regards to residency permits and family reunification. Something about a half,

the beloved and the rug ... *and when he arrives I fold the one half out*

inch by inch to prolong the night, the first voice whispered, and the second

politely said goodbye to Alice Mortensen and read a passage in appendix 21:

*the younger the foreign adopted child is when arriving in Denmark,
the less affiliation with and memory of the child's land of origin the
child will be considered to have.*

Well! So maybe that's why children adopted after they are 6
are included in the "relaxation" of the affiliation requirement not when they turn
28,

but first, as I understand it, when they turn 34.

$28 + 6 = 34!$

—that's absurd mathematics! shouted the second
and the first voice whispered the nearly 500-year-old
poem by Hwang Chin-I (1506-1544)

I divided

*a long January night in two
and laid the one half under the rug,
flowery and aromatic as a spring breeze.
And when he arrives I fold the one half out,
inch by inch, to prolong the night.*

See, now that's mild mathematics, sighed the second,
and squirmed and shouted: How incredibly absurd! Hwang Chin—I was 38
when she died, so if ... if she had been adopted as a 6-year-old
and loved an un-Danish, a Korean man for example, the spring night according to §
1, 1

was shortened to ... a fucking 4 years!

Shh. What does Hwang Chin-I have to do with § 1, 1?
said the first voice.

Oh, nothing, the second sighed, but there is something wrong with § 1, 1.
To adopt means to choose, and it's not the child's choice, no matter if its age is 0 or 7.
Don't go whispering about the fragrance of a flowery rug. Yell no to the age limit!
NOW!

But I would rather whisper about jasmine and *love*, whispered the first voice,
and the second shouted: *love* is spelled the same way as *laws* in Danish,
and § 1,1

is an example of ill-concealed *love-love!* (And the clock struck 12.)

In other words a law of love, the second continued, just like the 24-years-old regulation, and the first voice whispered 3 times: Shh, shh, shh, as the clock bonged 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 = 24.

Is that supposed to be a sum?

No.

It didn't add up.

Sorry. I was dizzy with love.

And the jasmine tea had turned so bitter and cold,
which, I said to myself, I would never be.

It wasn't too late, it's never too late
to put a beautiful dress on
and go to a party at midnight.

After Having Dreamt of Manna and Napalm

The catalog of all
 religions' flora, a dream.
The photographs, the source criticism,
 the comparative note system.
The overwhelming, all-encompassing,
 thoroughness of it.
War as day residue.
 The image of manna
as light green elm fruit,
 an unconscious error.
A night of rain.
 The cry "what is that?"
the next morning.
 Some delicate, dandruff-like
thing, something dainty.
 Like swollen hoarfrost,
pea-sized coriander seed.
 Mount Sinai's red dust.
Feces proportional
 to the number of pilgrims.
And later, the oasis – mint tea,
 cardboard, goat's milk, etc.
A desert that
 suggests its own name.
A desert that virginally
 consumes land.
It could very well be.
 Manna that melts
in your mouth. Manna that melts

when the sun is scorching.
A rain of fire.
Sticky jelly as link
between manna and napalm?
Napalm that clings
and burns. Napalm that melts the
mouth. Multicolored
matter. Corpses
with unusual injuries,
clothing intact. Categorical
denials, admissions
with qualifications. Not napalm,
but Mark-77. Not polystyrene
and gasoline, but polystyrene
and petroleum. The difference
less than the similarity. Between
napalm and manna: no similarity.
The difference between sticky
jelly and sticky jelly. Not
coherence: collapse.
The incidental
with faith and war. The good
working relationship. The clothing intact.
Grab your coat on your way out. I dreamt
I grabbed my coat on my way out.
I dreamt it continued, no comparison,
as white phosphorus
dissolves fat and burns.
As long as there is oxygen.