

***LITTLE LEAD PEOPLE AND OTHER POEMS***

**By Joanna Kurowska**

We have drawn a map-puzzle:  
cosmos is black, heaven is blue,  
hell is red, the earth is gray  
(some suspect, it could be green)

We made lead people—armies,  
some dressed yellow, some blue;  
saluting with the hand or fist;  
each on a different puzzle piece

We've made the rules for the crowd  
An apt list of dos and don'ts  
with consequences—clear sets  
of punishments and rewards

We assumed soldiers were bad  
and taught them accordingly  
As comfort, we gave them a god  
so they could repent their sins

Finally, we led each army  
to fight for their puzzle parts  
Such is the world we have made  
out from the flow of our hearts

***ALMIGHTY***

*for John Brownell*

Dear God

looking at your creation  
I've got some questions

if you are almighty,  
can you choose not to be  
wholly mighty?

if you cannot  
does that make you  
slightly less mighty?

if you choose to be  
only partially mighty  
will you still be almighty?

forgive my being bothersome  
I'm simply not sure what you are up to  
with your might

\* \* \*

beetles' colorful wings  
leaves' webs  
fingerprints  
autumn colors' profusion  
water's intricacy  
clouds' endless shapes  
rocks' abundance  
aquarium fish's variety  
many colors of skin  
potpourri of human faces  
but only one religion?

(From *The Wall & Beyond*, eLectio Publishig 2013)

***DISSECTION***

the poet is being  
chopped and chunked  
cut and sliced

here goes her hand, her veins  
split in two for a better view  
her skull deeply drilled into  
her eyes jabbed, heart unfolded

luckily, she stands next to the  
dissecting table and stares  
dispassionately at the things  
the machine does without

thinking, by the sheer inertia of  
its reasoning, its expansion  
its arrogance, its calculations  
its science, its economizing

How amazing she thinks I am standing so,  
intact, my hands filled with a whole,  
ripened, succulent fruit of poetry

### ***AWAKENING***

*I.M. of Bohdan Kurowski*

The train arrived  
much too early,  
when none of us  
expected it.

It must have stopped  
by the dark platform,  
and took off faster  
than the wind.

Before we knew it  
you jumped into the  
black crevice of  
the train's ear.

We did not manage  
to say "we love you"  
or catch your words.  
You were gone.

We were perplexed.  
We looked around  
until the next train  
came for us.

We searched for you  
at odd destinations,  
in the dim hallways  
of many stops

Until we came  
to a large terminal  
with a broad view  
of many exits.

There you were,  
smelling of tobacco;  
your soft beard

tickling my cheek.

You said "I love you."

The words took on

their full meaning.

They filled me up.

Your weightless touch

all around me

lasted until

I fell back asleep.

### **Bio**

**Joanna Kurowska** is a bi-lingual poet, the author of five poetry volumes, *The Butterfly's Choice* (Broadstone Books 2015), *Inclusions* (Cervena Barva Press 2014), *The Wall & Beyond* (eLectio Publishing 2013), and two books published in Poland, *Obok : Near* (Oficyna Literacka 1999); *Ściana : The Wall* (Wydawnictwo Dolnośląskie 1997). Her poetry has been published widely, in North American and European journals.

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