Silba Ljutak - Anja Glavinić

The House on the Island

The Letter

my Mother's Mother

always told her
the world was a dangerous place
it began in the sea

between their Island
and the shore where swimmers were processed
when the monsters that were there when that world had begun
pulled them by the fin
processed from the missing Father
who also thought he could swim
my Mother answered her Mother

that she wasn't afraid
of the sea monsters
or the factories with tall chimneys
but only of what would happen to the moles

when neither the Island nor the shore
had a single tree left
the world is a dangerous place

as it takes a twenty-year-old tree
to make a single sheet of paper
that can give only two obituaries
a tree less leaves us without

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two woodpeckers
twenty pounds of useful insects
and the initials of a great love
my Mother's Mother

always told her
the dangerous world could kill her
even before her time came
and that a long life meant
going to the store every day
then sleeping with the Sun's at its highest
my Mother left a note to her Mother

before she left
saying she didn't have to live long
but that she would try anyway
the whole world was not such a dangerous place

Germination

on the first warm weekend in the Big City

that one ceramic jar
she had brought with her
seemed rather empty
it would be a good place

to start an unusual life
she thought with a box of assorted seeds
on her knees
I bear the image of my Father

in all his history
the cause

the reason

the plot

and the farewell

something will have to end me anyway

when I live out my years

and turn into peace

the one who would become my Mother

closed her eyes tightly and took the first seed

under her fingers



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