Zoran Penevski

A Miracle in the Blue Forest

Sample translated by Sandra Bakić Topalović

That evening was a strange and scary affair.
Actually, more strange than scary:
Forest animals were entirely awake there,
Laughing out loud, wild and merry.

"I'm going to eat the lion", said the mouse.
"My empty stomach is rumbling terribly.
And the lion is scary only in his house,
Cause he snores while he sleeps - *horribly*!"

Then he said to the tiger: "Yo!
Don't be like a slow wolf, all bitter.
Indeed, your stripes are like zebra's, bro,
But look at a crooked beak on that critter!"

"Hey, listen to me, owl",
Jokes are pouring down like a rain.
"Your eye is faulty – no, don't growl!
And you have a chicken's brain!"

Oh, he continued his insulting song,
And the next victim was the bear:

“Those who fear of you – they are wrong.
I am stronger than you, I swear!”

All of the animals laughed akin!
But then another creature shed the mouse's skin:
The one giving them all that funk
Was the actor – Tom the skunk.

Behold! Dormouse beneath the tiger’s stripes;
Hedgehog behind a bunch of feathers;
As the golden oriole a lion mask swipes,
The badger takes off the wolf leathers.

And every evening the little crew
Enjoyed their acting through and through,
Showing the folk of the Forest Blue
Exactly what each of them could do.

The director of this tiny troupe
Was Tom, his destiny distraught:
Even though he was skunk in the group
He didn’t stink, that did he not!

He was able to mimic everything,
It was his gift, truly great.
About it he couldn’t do a thing,
The theatre was his fate!

He could quack like a duck,
Or screech like a car alarm.
He could go woof, meow or cluck,
Imitated everything on a farm.

But alas! Mighty big beasts
Gathered in secret one night.
Angry, they vented and raised their fists,
Decided to put on a fight.

“My beak isn’t crooked!”, the eagle peeped.
“They insult us”, the lion roared.
“Schedule a showdown!”, the bear leaped,
“Our reputation is totally floored!”

The lion’s decided, in front of them all:
„Listen to me, animals big and small!
A new forest law is now in place:
No one shall put on the real beast’s face!

All the acting costumes will be banned,
From this day on, this isn’t a game!
Thus from mockery we protect our land,
acting shall not tarnish our name!"