

# Riddarfjärden | Singö

From Atlantis (2017)

by: Marie Silkeberg

translation Kelsi D. Vanada

You see a dove's egg outside the window in the stairwell.

The steaming water in the drizzle.

Midsummer night.

You watch him sleep. Mumble. His unrest growing.

What are they called then the ones who are raped.

If the word is not criminals he asks.

Someone should take away the veil he says.

Full moon over Riddarfjärden.

The goats in the forest a winter night you think.

One of the last summer nights in June.

The immense sky. Rich with color.

You saw the nurses turn him after the attack.

Only at the turn did you realize.

The airplanes and the vapor trails.

He gestures with his hand.

Away he says.

Die. Die.

You hear the seagulls' sudden piercing screams.

I'm not ready she says.

The seconds flow rather than tick. In long liquid sheets.

You see a hare heading toward the light of the streetlamps.

It stands all still for a moment on the asphalt.

Before it darts off again into the darkness.

The playground in the dark.

Like oar strokes into the summer night you think.

The thin string. The pulse.

Chest. Ribcage.

To slip back into your initial mystery.

You see the hare again. At the bike rack.

The larynx is extremely enlarged on his skinny neck.

His body burning hot.

You hear the explosion from the tunnel construction.

The sough of the trees. The body sleeping.

White elder in the park.

White flowers in the room.

Woodland stars you think.

*Skovstjerne.*

A guess.

You see his eyes move behind the eyelids.

The movements of his lids. In sleep.

You think about the high dive at Fågelöudde.

The darkness.

The leap.

The breathless seconds before you reached the water's surface.

His chest heaves and sinks.

You feel a kind of disappointment. A bitterness draw through the body.

What pain. To live. To leave.

The strings. The ties. Loosening into the night.

Sleep and we'll find something fun to do tomorrow you hear her say.

Her cry.

In the exhaustion. Under the hammering. Flat. Out.

To be left on your own.

Forced to forgive.

Merciful you think. Mercy.

Slowly.

Death's violent abuse.

The heart behind the ribs. Quivering beats.

The prominent vein over the skull.

His hands are boiling hot.

The fluid runs. Slowly. Everything called body.

Through the tubes. His sex. All the soft parts.

No sign of seizure.

As if death were infinite.

In its slowness more and more resembling life.

You count his breaths in different combinations.

Intervals.

Of strength.

Weakening. Gasps.

It will happen tonight. It will not happen tonight.

The seagulls' screams. Circles.

One more hot day dawning.

Dark blood. Urine.

Long lapses in breath.

Fluid.



Running out. Into the drain. The sewers.

A whole life.

You see all the small fuzzy movements of his face.

His eyes.

Stronger than the breath. The pulse.

A diffusion into infinity.

You see his white hair has darkened at the neck.

His eyebrows turning black again.

The raven caws in the tree outside the window.

Swallows glide. Tumble in the twilight.

A vapor trail is drawn and dissolves over the summer sky.

In the room there's almost no air anymore.

Twenty-seven seconds of pause.

One breath.

Twenty-three seconds.

White lips.

Warm head.

The mouth was shaping an ever-whiter O.

Frost.

His back was still warm she says.

The eyes hard to close.

You screamed at the sight of the skull.

When you re-entered the room.

A shiver ran through your entire body.

You biked home under the big July moon.

Through the warm night. Full of partying drunk people.

When night comes sleep ends.

The winds sweep through the high grass. Whisk through the red currant.

Dragonflies. Para-sleep.

The wind picks up.

You dreamed. The dream seemed as if outside your body.

Floating. A thin texture.

That he was still alive.

About to die and you wouldn't get there in time.

To walk.

The body in aching parts.

The ghost inside the body. Not outside.

A black cat lies stretched out on the hot asphalt.

In the middle of the street. In the roadway.

Against the rocks the waves break. Break.

A swan. A snail.

Blades of grass.

Night moths.

Autumn chill already in the air.

You dreamed he looked at you with wide open clear blue eyes.

Everybody guess which hand, rises an unbelievably clear child's voice  
from the garden nearby.