

Reflective and musical are the words that come to mind in describing Victor Fet's poems. And to mind there are so few writers out there, in any language, to which these descriptors can be simultaneously applied. It is not that one consciously feels that in his verses the poet is thinking, it is that his art is in making the words of the poems acquire a life of their own. And it is the life of the mind that comes through so clearly— whether it is about the deep nature of the genetic code, or the workings of memory. The music is there in Fet's every poem, in the delicious essence of unexpected rhymes – I would not imagine that you could build ever so naturally toward ending a poem with “палимпсест” or “целлюлозы”.

Every aspect of life and literature is Fet's subject. But he returns time and time again to the scientific. Which is appropriate, as he is a scientist. But it is also extremely difficult to do, which is why there is so little poetry, in any language, which takes its inspiration in nontrivial ways from science. Why? Is it because science is inherently prosaic, full of hedging, exceptions? Is because it has layers upon layers of nomenclature and jargon, introduced for good reasons, to enhance communication among practitioners, but keeping most of us out? Victor Fet's poems show us that it can be done, that science offers us metaphors that are sublime. And that the ideas of science can be freed from the jargon of the trade to roam free among us, enriching every aspect of our experience.

The scientific enters naturally in Victor Fet's poems, cohabits with the intellectual or imaginative. So in his poem ЛЕТА, the mythical river of memory, wandering through references to Pushkin and the 20th century, ends under the geologist's gaze:

И новых дней геолог,
Познав добро и зло,
Твоих слоёв осколок
Уложит под стекло.

and in ЧАСТИЦА, which gives its name to the title of a section, the path of some elementary particle in a cloud chamber becomes the occasion for a deep reflection:

Запись этого пути
мне хотелось бы найти,
где понятно, что мгновенный,
зыбкий мир, навстречу мчась, —
нашей жизни сокровенной

ТОЛЬКО ВИДИМАЯ ЧАСТЬ.

which has traveled far, and wisely, from the literal particle.

Victor Fet's images now roam in my mind; they will not leave you.