

TRAVEL PERMIT, ROUND TRIP

A small calf on a cart, on cobblestones, happily whisking his tail, a Polish stork, lost in thought, a peasant woman wearing, as you'd expect, a kerchief on her head. A basket in her hand. The landscape rolls along at the same, steady pace, without stopping, and then illogically veils itself with hills.

I switch seats with a child who would rather watch the world unroll.

The tape is winding up somewhere on the other side and the reel must already be bulging. It contains so much, all that and this too, the perpetual policemen, by trade and calling, stalking furiously, and these light-hearted village names: Pszczółki, Szymankowo.

My face may be still, but in my heart I'm bursting with laughter. We're allowed to travel by train again. This delicate pressure on my arm is only your sleep.

by Piotr Sommer (Poland), translated by Elżbieta Volkmer and Halina Janod

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