

Peter Burzynski

## Slavophile

Your tears don't impress me, Russia.  
I have this grave image of you singing

to the bacon brown birds that flew over  
the lids of your eyes. You were standing

tippietoeed, Russia. I like that you have mud  
beneath your nails. I like that you have mud.

I bought a new scythe on Tuesday,  
but I'm not going to share it with you.

You taught my father numbers, Russia,  
but you made him play with yarn.

I'm growing weary of excuses, Russia. You're slow.  
Don't blame it on where you fell from the clouds

filled with soap and lye. Don't blame it on the tsars,  
you've been singing lullabies to their throne.

You've been a child, bullets boiled, cubed,  
and bursting in a bag.

You've been a mother, churning the cud  
spitting the beets and grain.

You've orchestrated your shell don't say it's heavy,  
it's filled with hay. I've buried potatoes with you

and tried to learn your game. Pawn to E-3, pawn  
to save. I wish we could dig up all the pets we've lost.



Build them a palace. Their bones alabaster thin,  
now candles to stave off the darkness of ghosts.

You're a swine, Russia. You've eaten my bees  
and I can't have flowers without my bees.

