



## Collected Body

*Valzhyna Mort*

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"Mort is a fireball. . . . Personal, political, and passionate, Mort's poetry will surely sustain many reading audiences. Highly recommended."—*Library Journal*

"A one-of-a-kind work of passion and insight."—*Midwest Book Review*

"Mort's style—tough and terse almost to the point of aphorism—recalls the great Polish poets Czeslaw Milosz and Wislawa Szymborska."—*Los Angeles Times*

Valzhyna Mort is a dynamic Belarusian poet, and *Collected Body* is her first collection composed in English. Whether writing about sex, relatives, violence, or fish markets as opera, Mort insists on vibrant, dark truths. "Death hands you every new day like a golden coin," she writes, then warns that as the bribe grows "it gets harder to turn down."

### "Preface"

*on a bare tree—  
a red beast,  
so still, it has become the tree.  
now it's the tree that prowls over the beast,  
a cautious beast itself.*

*a stone thrown at its breast*

*is so fast—the stone has become the beast.  
now it's the beast that throws itself like a stone,  
blood like a dog-rose tree on a windy day,  
and the moon is trying on your face  
for the annual masquerade of the dead.*

*death decides to wait to hear more.  
so death mews:  
first—your story, then—me.*

**Valzhyna Mort** was born in Minsk, Belarus. Her American debut, *Factory of Tears*, appeared in 2008 and she was featured on the cover of *Poets & Writers*. She has received many honors and awards, including a Civitella Raineri fellowship. She lives in Baltimore, Maryland.

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