





MARINA TSVETAeva

from POEMS ABOUT MOSCOW

Above the dark blue groves embracing Moscow
the carillons of bells resemble rain;
blind pilgrims roam along Kaluga Road –

familiar and melodious, the way
erases and erases all the names
of humble wayfarers, in darkness singing praise.

And I reflect: one day I, too, shall turn
my face away from you, friends, enemies –
abandoning the Russian tongue's intransigence –

and place a silver cross upon my breast,
and cross myself before I quietly trace
the pilgrims' path down old Kaluga Road.

Trinity Sunday, 1916.

Translated by Jennifer Woodhouse

Translator's note: This poem is No. 6 in a cycle numbered 1–9.